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EDINBURGH REVIEW,

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No. CCCCXXXI.

Art. I.—INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT.

1. *Industrial Efficiency.* A comparative study of industrial life in England, Germany and America. By Arthur Shadwell, M.A., M.D. New Edition. London: Longmans, Green and Co. 1909.
2. *The Industrial System.* An inquiry into earned and unearned income. By J. A. Hobson. London: Longmans, Green and Co. 1909.
3. *Unemployment.* A problem of industry. By W. H. Beveridge. London: Longmans, Green and Co. 1909.

It has occasionally been noted by observers of human nature that those people in the world who are fondest of giving advice to others are often those who in their own occupations have met with the least success. A man who has failed in his profession is not deterred by that circumstance from explaining to neophytes the true method of attaining success. The young lady who has just made her début in society finds in her maiden aunt the readiest and most voluble adviser as to the proper course to pursue for getting married. Those, on the other hand, whose greater knowledge or abilities have brought them worldly success, are apt to be somewhat backward in advising others who are trying to follow in their footsteps. Nor is there any great difficulty in discerning the reason for a fact which at first sight appears so paradoxical. For success implies two qualities in addition to the ordinary qualities of ability, industry, opportunity and so forth. It implies, firstly, a capacity for seeing

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difficulties, where others think that all is smooth and easy; and, secondly, a capacity for learning by experience, so that the errors which everyone makes at first are recognised and avoided for the future. The unsuccessful man starts life, like other men, with a more or less definite system of ideas as to the correct procedure for getting on. He has perhaps learnt his ideas in all humility from his father, or from some other spiritual adviser; and they are therefore supported by authority which it has never occurred to him to question. He applies his system impartially in all situations where he finds himself; he fails to see that there are some obstacles which it is not adequate to overcome; he fails to profit by experience when it has on occasion broken down. His canons of behaviour are fixed for all time, susceptible neither of addition nor modification. In open competition he goes down; but he carries with him to the last his organon of ideas, and is as ready to impart them to other people as infallible truths, as he always was to act upon them himself. Very different is the case of one who has achieved success. He knows the difficulties. His early habits of thought have been constantly modified and added to. Every failure with him has brought its lesson; and on the next occasion he has behaved differently. He dislikes having to give advice except in a very general form, because he knows that no code of rules, however complex, is sufficient to cope with the infinite variety of modern life. Each situation must be dealt with as it arises on its own merits. The proper solution is more a matter of instinct than of reasoned principles; an instinct which has been acquired by frequent converse with somewhat similar situations, and by the experience which dealing with them has brought. An attempt to inculcate into a youthful mind principles for guidance (except of the most general kind) is apt to injure his judgment; by causing him to attach undue importance to those factors in a problem which are covered by the principles, and to overlook those pretty certain to be present which the guidance of authority does not touch.

What application has this principle to social or political activities at the present day? Society is made up of individuals, and any fundamental peculiarities of character which they present is inevitably reproduced in the aggregate, of which they are units. If it is true that, among individuals, the persons most ready to give advice are those who have had the least success in life, we may confidently look for signs of the same law in the ordinary working of our social life. And surely we have not to look very long, before finding our anticipations abundantly realised. It would, of course, be an exaggeration

to say that persons interested in social affairs may be divided into two classes : those who, having read and studied much, are doubtful what ought to be done, and those who, having never read or studied at all, are certain what ought to be done. But, if it is an exaggeration, it has at all events some basis of fact. For there is one class of social student, which works laboriously to discover the facts forming the groundwork of a social science, and which has a single eye to the truth or untruth of the theories propounded. Their books, if they are lucky, may attain a sale of a few hundred copies. And there is another class of social student, which Adam Smith describes as ' that insidious and ' crafty animal,' the politician, whose function it is to tell all men what they ought to do, without wasting his valuable time in first investigating the truth of the theories which he advocates. We are all of us acquainted with the type of ignorant politician, constantly clamouring for some new ' social scheme,' and contriving thereby to maintain his popularity with his ever-credulous constituency. Has he read Mill's ' Political Economy ' ? Oh no, he has never read that ! Has he read Spencer's ' Principles ' of Sociology ' ? No, he would not be seen within a mile of it ! He has not read any of the classics on the subjects on which he vociferously aids in guiding the destinies of the country ; nor has he taken any other steps to inform himself of the wisdom of the schemes for which he daily votes. Verily, there is some truth in the statement that those who are most free with their advice are those whose advice is least worth having.

It is not with the insidious and crafty animal that we have to do in the present paper. His latest oddities will doubtless be examined elsewhere in this Review. We are confronted with the far more agreeable and profitable task of reviewing three books by authors whose sole object has been to ascertain facts and test the truth of theories, and who have successfully avoided the bias which political partisanship is so apt to produce. By the publication of these works, Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co. have performed a service for which they deserve the thanks of every serious inquirer into the facts upon which political theories are founded. The three books all deal with the same subject, the industrial system of Great Britain, but from totally different points of view, and by quite opposite methods. Dr. Shadwell, in his ' Industrial Efficiency,' takes up a purely descriptive attitude. He hates theories ; indeed, he is perhaps too much inclined here and there to scoff at economics.* He confines

* As where he speaks of human nature—' that rock whereon economic theories are perpetually foundering.' An economic theory

himself in his book almost entirely to an investigation of facts. He travels through the industrial towns of Great Britain, Germany and America, describing all that he sees, and comparing with one another the several industries in each country. He details the prevailing hours of work, wages, and social conditions; he describes the working of the factory acts, the influence of the trade unions, and the various other factors which make for or against industrial efficiency. And the book derives much of its value from the fact that he does not advocate any special theories of what ought to be done, or embark upon political propaganda, but is interested only in compiling a statement of the actually existing condition of affairs.

From a very different, though still a useful, point of view does Mr. Hobson approach the subject in his 'Industrial System.' If Dr. Shadwell neglects the theoretical aspect, Mr. Hobson fixes his attention exclusively upon it. As in Dr. Shadwell's work, the industrial system is carefully described by Mr. Hobson, but it is described not in concrete terms, but in a purely abstract disquisition. He does not touch upon this or that special trade but propounds a general theory of industry. His book lacks the statistics and tables of figures which are scattered through 'Industrial Efficiency.' He speaks of trades from a generic rather than from a specific point of view; his symbols are algebraic, and not arithmetic. Spinning theories is undeniably a dangerous occupation—the theories are so liable to be erroneous. On the other hand, a theory that is known to be true is worth a whole multitude of facts; and we must reserve for later examination the question to what extent Mr. Hobson's theories are true.

The remaining book on our list, Mr. Beveridge's 'Unemployment,' is an admirable monograph on a most important and difficult social subject. He gives a detailed description of the facts concerning unemployment, endeavours to set out its causes, and investigates the various proposed remedies. A study

cannot founder upon human nature, any more than the Differential Calculus can founder upon human nature, and for the same reason; that they neither of them have anything to do with human motives at large. An economic theory is a statement that, given certain premises, certain consequences will ensue. Politicians, with their usual perspicacity, are fond of applying economic principles where the implied premises are not present; and when the expected consequences do not ensue, so far from being abashed by their own misapplication of the theory, they proceed with inconceivable effrontery to abuse the theory itself.

of this book leaves the impression that there is not much more to be said on the subject. We propose to examine these three books in some detail, and then to attempt an estimate of the actual condition of British industry at the present day, and the prospects of advance or decadence which lie before the British people.

It is very much the fashion among a certain class of politicians, particularly those who pique themselves on their patriotism, to decry all the institutions of their own country, and to extol those of Germany. They are never tired of announcing that we are a decadent and enervated race, that the Germans are immensely our superiors, that our only hope is to adopt all their institutions, and imitate their doings as much as possible. With the glorious inconsistency characteristic of politicians, these very same people are continually urging us, feeble and decadent though we are, to hurl ourselves headlong into a war with this superior and mightier nation. We are not here concerned to investigate the claim of such politicians to be called patriotic. A nation which aims at imitating another nation is by implication inferior to that other nation ; and we have little respect for that patriotism which is prepared to acquiesce in open inferiority. We are concerned only to ascertain whether the voice of our patriots is true ; whether we are really overtaken by the decadence which they advertise with trumpet-blasts over the land. Such at all events is not the conclusion which transpires from Dr. Shadwell's comparison of British with foreign industries. There can be no doubt that German industry, as also American industry, has reached a very high pitch of efficiency. But there is equally little doubt that British industry is also at a high pitch of efficiency, and Dr. Shadwell indicates his opinion that the efficiency is increasing every day.

' Criticisms of the inefficiency [of British manufacturers] have been very much overdone and have damaged English industries in the eyes of foreign customers, who have heard them denounced and their rivals extolled by Englishmen so loudly that the notion that England is indeed " played out " has taken deep root. I have met with it everywhere. Now it may be doing the fishmonger a service to call his attention to the fact that his fish are not so fresh as they might be ; but to run up and down the market crying " stinking fish " and pointing out the extreme freshness of the goods proffered by a rival firm is not wise, more especially when the fish of the rival firm are not so very fresh after all. This is what a good many English visitors to the United States have done. They have overstated the case, partly through generalising too hastily, partly through ignorance of the conditions at home, partly through being dazzled by the American shop windows.'

In short there is no ground for the spirit of violent self-depreciation prevailing among the politicians above referred to. A spirit of modesty and effort is no doubt necessary and desirable, but the raucous self-abuse of our patriots can only lead to the realisation of their terrors. A dispassionate survey of the situation, such as that conducted by Dr. Shadwell, shows, indeed, that in some respects the Germans are more efficient than we are, while in other respects the Americans are more efficient than we are. But it also shows that in many respects we are superior to either.* The Germans excel in all that requires thoroughness, as also in the attributes of discipline and obedience. They are indefatigable workers—plodders in fact, not very apt in the production of new ideas, nor very successful in spheres calling for originality and enterprise, but very quick to seize the ideas of others, and turn them to the best use. Perfect order, method and discipline is the secret of their success, and it is reflected in every one of their institutions. Conscription sits lightly upon such a people ; methods of compulsion are everywhere favoured, and everywhere successful. The sphere of Government action is very large ; laws are numerous and inquisitorial, and they are implicitly obeyed. They crawl along slowly, but with a dogged determination that never falters.

At the opposite pole from Germany is the United States. There the realm of Government action is comparatively narrow ; laws are few, and those few are constantly broken and disregarded. The people are not thorough ; they are always wanting to get through their work with the least possible trouble to themselves : hence their extraordinary ingenuity in the invention of labour-saving appliances. They are not obedient or disciplined. Conscription would be unthinkable among them. Compulsory methods are everywhere disliked. But their enterprise is boundless : their originality is inexhaustible : the daring industrial projects which they conceive, and successfully carry through, are the wonder of the world. They have nothing of the order or method of the Germans, nothing of the fixed determination which can never be shaken ; their progress is not slow, plodding, and sure, but brilliant and somewhat vacillating. The United States is a country showing everywhere the signs

* In the competition between different countries, one nation is constantly passing or being passed by another. Thus Dr. Shadwell's book, which was published early in 1909, contains an account of how steel ingots of 85 tons are cast in Germany, a feat ' not attempted anywhere else.' In October of the same year, we ourselves witnessed the casting of a 100-ton steel ingot in Sheffield.

of progress and enterprise, with little stress laid upon order or law.

Half-way between these two extremes lies Great Britain. We have not the order or method of the Germans, but we greatly excel the Americans in those qualities. Nor have we the boldness of enterprise and speculation which the Americans possess; yet in these qualities, again, we are considerably superior to the Germans. Our institutions do not run to extremes in either direction. We have to a great extent the advantages of both, while avoiding the hazards of either. On what grounds, then, are we called upon to set forth indiscriminately and liken our institutions to those of Germany? The differences between the two nations are enormous. Germany is a new country, it is surrounded on all sides by powerful and hostile nations, it is a country which, though saddled with a huge taxation, contains but little wealth. Great Britain, on the contrary, is a long-established nation, protected by the sea from the more imminent dangers of invasion, and is immensely wealthy. Moreover, the character of the people differs widely from the character of the German people; and there seems no reason for admitting the claim of our patriots that it is inferior to theirs. But even supposing that it were inferior, the foisting of foreign institutions and foreign methods upon a country not suited to them would certainly not have the magical effect which is supposed in transforming our vices into virtues. A far more certain and immediate effect would be to stamp out those virtues which we already have. A man's natural capacities can easily be quenched by setting him in an incongruous environment; no new ones can be implanted by this simple method. Although a superficial appearance of new virtues may be given, they are not of the same force or depth as when they grow naturally among the people. They never can acquire the same intensity, nor can they ever serve us in competition with those countries where they are indigenous. They constitute at the best a miserable substitute for the advantages which we naturally possess, which are indigenous and therefore deep-rooted among us. All this seems so obvious as scarcely to need saying. But when we reflect upon the agitation which is being carried forward to introduce compulsory methods into every department of our national life, we see that it is necessary to meet the charge of decadence brought against us by the patriots, and to beg them to restrain their affection for foreign institutions by the consideration that they would not be a success when applied to a people to whom they are unsuited.

A comparison of the Factory Acts in the three countries offers

several points of interest. We were prepared to hear that the British Factory Acts are more stringent than the American; but we fancy it will be a surprise to most people to learn that they are also more stringent than the German. Yet it is certainly the case that in Germany the Factory Acts are neither so extensive nor so detailed in their operation as the Factory Acts in this country. The framers of the German Acts appear to have kept constantly in view the danger, which such laws must inevitably bring, of arresting enterprise and of placing a handicap on the home industries in competition with foreign industries. In America the comparison is rendered more difficult by the fact that each State has its own separate laws, and that they differ very much from one another. In some, such as Massachusetts, the laws nearly reach the stringency of European countries. In others, such as South Carolina, regulation extends only to the employment of children and to the hours of labour; while in Georgia and one or two other of the Southern States, there is no factory legislation at all.

There can be no question that factory laws do heavily penalise industrial operations. The manufacturer is not only hindered by negative restrictions, such as limitation of the hours of labour, the employment of women and children, &c., but he is hampered also by the extra outlay which he is called upon to make, for fencing machinery and for every kind of sanitary contrivance. An interesting illustration of the effects of the Acts is to be found in the cotton industry of the United States. There has been since 1900 an extraordinary developement of this industry in the Southern States, where the Acts are very light or altogether non-existent, while in the New England States, where they are comparatively severe, the progress has been slow. The competition of the Southern States is not only felt in New England, but is beginning seriously to affect Lancashire, which appears to be rapidly losing the China trade, and to be suffering also in the India trade.

But industrial efficiency is adversely affected by factory legislation in yet another way. The prohibition of the employment of children below a certain age has a double effect. On the one hand it removes from the market a large quantity of cheap labour, thus materially increasing the cost of production. On the other hand it prevents persons from beginning to learn their trades in their earliest years, when manual dexterity is most easily acquired. They consequently never reach the proficiency which they would otherwise have done; and there is an immediate diminution of industrial efficiency. As Dr. Shadwell remarks: 'The undoubtedly superior skill of English

' operatives in some textile processes is chiefly due to their having ' begun younger and, indeed, at an age earlier than the present ' law permits.' *

In addition to the material loss inflicted by factory legislation, it is subject to the further grave accusation of involving undue interference with individual liberty. In the early days of the Acts, the inspectors were undoubtedly held in extreme dislike by manufacturers, who had been brought up to believe that an Englishman's home is his castle. We can well imagine the feelings of a respectable manufacturer, whose business perhaps depended on the continued secrecy of some special process which he had discovered, when for the first time there presented himself at the factory gates a Government inspector, of portentous appearance and uncouth manners, demanding instant admittance to every corner of the works, and issuing instructions of the most uncompromising description, which had to be literally obeyed. But this feeling has to a great extent worn off. The inspectors are for the most part not portentous or uncompromising, but tactful and conciliatory. The manufacturers, who to a very large extent are truly anxious to ensure the welfare of their workmen, welcome the presence of an expert who may indicate to them what measures ought to be taken and perhaps relieve them from responsibility if an accident does occur.

The Factory Acts, which were initiated in order to protect employees from the exploitation of their masters, are now applied to a great extent in coercing the employees themselves for their own supposed good ; and herein appears to us to lie the chief danger to individual liberty. Where the action of the inspectors is purely advisory, no exception can, of course, be taken to it. It often happens, for instance, that the young women in the mills like to work with their long hair falling down their backs. Some fine day they will happen to bring their heads near to a revolving shaft, negligent of the hideous danger which awaits them. A draught of air blows the hair on to the shaft, which catches it up, whirls it round, and tears the

* We may take this opportunity of calling attention to a fallacy which is very widespread among persons interested in social affairs, and which even Dr. Shadwell has not escaped. Describing the early history of Sheffield, he says : ' Arms and domestic cutlery were undoubtedly the earliest of the Sheffield industries, and *the skill of the people was developed in that direction and fixed by inheritance.*' The notion that acquired skill can be inherited offends against one of the cardinal maxims of modern biology. Each generation has to start afresh, and derives no superior facility whatever from its parents' training.

entire scalp off the head of the unfortunate victim. This accident is continually occurring in the textile industries ; but there can be no doubt that its frequency has been very much reduced by the constant warning of the inspectors.

Usually, however, their action is not confined to warning. In Birmingham we came across a case where the inspector had ordered very extensive lavatory accommodation to be provided at considerable expense in a certain factory. When the manufacturer had installed it, it was found that the men refused to make use of it, saying they had no need for it ; whereupon a new regulation was issued, compelling every employee to wash his hands at stated times in the lavatory provided. This sort of paternal regulation we hold to be altogether vicious and objectionable in its bearings upon individual liberty. Another side of the Factory Acts which is difficult to defend on the ground of individual liberty is the inclusion of women with children instead of with men, so that they are subjected to greater restrictions in many ways than men are, being thereby not only handicapped as regards earning capacity, but made to feel that they are irresponsible persons, to be treated like children.*

In some cases the work of the factory inspectors might very well be carried out by officials of the trade unions. The tendency to ' time-cribbing ' is a case in point. The manufacturers are fond of letting their machinery run for three or four minutes beyond the hour at which work should cease ; for in the course of a week these extra minutes make quite a material difference in the quantity of their output. The inspectors often become aware of this transgression only by a hint from the unions, who would themselves be quite competent to stop it. On the

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* Legislation of this kind gives some colour to the charge that women are not treated by the law on an equality with men. On the other hand, the stock argument of the woman suffragists, that women's wages are lower than men's and ought to be equalised by law, must appear absurd to anyone who is acquainted with industrial conditions in the north of England. In the textile industries, where women are very largely employed and where the wage-system is almost wholly piecework, a woman receives precisely the same sum as a man for the same piece of work. The inequality of wages only exists in those trades or occupations in which, for some reason or other, timework prevails : a clear indication that their wages are only lower because they are able to do less than men in the same time. To attempt to alter this by legislation could of course only result in throwing women out of employment, and replacing them by a smaller number of men.

other hand the employees themselves sometimes continue to work after the machinery has come to a standstill. This is illegal for women, but not for men. Women can be, and are, ordered by the inspectors instantly to cease work, whereas the men do not come within their jurisdiction in such matters at all.

From the foregoing observations it will be apparent that the Factory Acts do constitute a very real incubus on industry. On the other hand, they secure sound conditions of labour, and greatly improve the lot of the working man. The improvement can only be attained by paying the cost; and it is a matter for politicians to consider how far it is wise or just to burden industry for this purpose.

With regard to hours of work, Dr. Shadwell finds that the English hours are much shorter than either the German or American. 'I cannot find any industry in which the English 'hours are not shorter.' The normal week in England is fifty-three, fifty-four, or fifty-five hours. In Germany the average working day is an hour or an hour and a half longer, and the same thing probably holds of America. But in both America and Germany a movement is in progress towards shorter hours, so that the difference between them and Great Britain is diminishing. A legislative eight-hour day would, of course, result in a corresponding diminution of output. This diminution has already taken place in the production of coal as a consequence of the Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Act of 1908, in spite of the strenuous denial by political partisans that any diminution would result.* The same diminution of output has followed the same step in other industries; and if the restriction were applied to industries where foreign competition was felt, disastrous effects might ensue.

Wages are lowest in Germany and highest in America. High wages, however, cannot be accounted as a loss to manufacturers, if they imply a greater efficiency on the part of the workmen. From the manufacturer's point of view the important question is not how much he has to pay his individual workmen, but what is the wages-cost for a given quantity of output. Dr. Shadwell has obtained from Sir John Brunner some very interesting statistics on this point for the alkali trade. Assuming the rate of wages in England to be represented by 100, it would be represented in Germany by 78, and in America by 135, in this trade. But in spite of this fact the labour-

* See, for instance, speech by Mr. Keir Hardie in the House of Commons, July 7, 1908.

cost per ton of output is *lower* in England than either in Germany or America, the relative proportions being 100, 102, 148. The cause of this is that for an equal output fewer men are required in England than in Germany or America, the proportions here being 100, 131, 110 ; and that, although labour-saving machinery accounts for a small part of this lessened labour bill, the greater part is due to the superior capacity of the British workman. As Dr. Shadwell puts it : ' It takes eleven men in America to ' do the work of ten in England. They doubtless flag. That it ' takes two more in Germany is probably explained by their ' more leisurely method of working.' Here, then, is an awkward fact for the patriots. The Germans have the full advantage of military training, and of all the other wonderful devices which we are assured will multiply our efficiency an hundred-fold ; yet it takes thirteen German workmen to do the work of ten British workmen.

With regard to the relative advantages of piecework and time-work, we agree with Dr. Shadwell that the former is by far the more desirable. Payment by work done encourages efficiency in the most direct manner ; payment by time positively discourages it. Probably many people have contracted a low opinion of the British working-man by watching unskilled labourers working by time. We have sometimes seen such labourers working by the roadside throw down their spades and fling their arms to and fro in order to get warm ! It is obvious enough there is no piecework there. On the other hand, we have walked through cotton mills and engineering works, and found every man intent upon his work, throwing his heart thoroughly into it. Here the payment is entirely by the piecework method (except in cases where there is some special duty not admitting of being reckoned in this manner). With reference to the actual amount of wages, the general rule is perfectly clear that, within limits, efficiency varies directly with the wages. High wages therefore are by no means necessarily a tax on industry ; but may, on the contrary, be conducive to the cheapest production. In co-partnership businesses, such as the South Metropolitan Gas Company, where wages are high and are supplemented by a share in the profits, efficiency has reached a very high pitch, and the heavy labour bill, so far from injuring the business, has helped to make it an immense success. But here the interest of the men is fully identified with the success of the business, and the advantages which piecework has over timework are more completely secured.

In the matter of housing, Dr. Shadwell finds that England again has the advantage. He reckons that the average rent

per room in the industrial towns is 1*s.* 3*d.* in England, 2*s.* in Germany, and 2*s.* 6*d.* in America. He is able to quote the census to show that housing conditions distinctly improved between 1891 and 1901; and he considers that now the supply keeps pace fairly with the demand—very different indeed from the 'house-famine' which rages in Germany. The problem in England is one of quality, not of quantity; and where a scarcity of housing is actually felt it is usually due to the demolition of slums. The scarcity is then often made more acute by the stringency of regulations governing the erection of new houses. Building speculation is discouraged, and poor families whose homes in the slums have been abolished are left without resource. In England, while the quantity of houses fully keeps pace with the increase of population, the quality is undergoing a rapid and continuous improvement, so that social reformers need have no alarm on this score.

The cost of living also is lower in England than in the other two countries. 'Food is on the whole considerably cheaper in 'industrial England than in industrial America or Germany, 'and probably somewhat cheaper in America than in Germany.' Yet British families spend quite a considerable amount more upon the purchase of food than families of similar status in Germany or America. Dr. Shadwell's statistics contradict

'two industriously circulated legends—one that the working-class families are much better fed in the United States, the other that a large proportion of the population in this country is underfed, hungry or starving. All the evidence of every kind that I have gathered emphatically negatives the latter assumption, and my conclusion is corroborated by others. . . . Between 1880 and 1900 the comparative level of industrial wages rose from 81 to 100, while the cost of food fell from 142 to 100. It is, however, unnecessary to labour the point; the statement is only made to further political or some other interested ends.'

'In the winter of 1904–5, when the distress caused by want of employment at West Ham attracted so much attention, the local theatres were filled night after night chiefly by working-class audiences.'

The influence of trade unions upon industrial efficiency has been very marked, and there can be no doubt that for the most part they have done extremely valuable work. Employers have now become accustomed to them, as they have to the factory inspectors, and view them not with hostility but occasionally even as useful aids for dealing with their men. The cases of tyranny and short-sightedness occasionally brought up against

the unions should not blind us to the fact that they constitute one of the main pillars of the industrial system in the North of England, and could not possibly be dispensed with. Like every other individual or corporate body, they make mistakes from time to time; they may occasionally be harsh, or petty, or they may use improper methods towards 'blacklegs'; and these mistakes are made the most of by those who consider that all labour should be unorganised, and the slave rather than the coadjutor of capital. It is true that the action of the unions is frequently in opposition to the apparent interests of the employer. They keep up wages, they regulate hours of work, they introduce a collective bargaining which places the workman on an equality with his employer, instead of being wholly at his mercy. On the other hand, they not infrequently enable manufacturers to tide over periods of depression by consenting to reductions of wages, which never could have been enforced without their help. The short time which has now been worked so many months in the cotton trade, and involves the operatives in a loss of wages amounting to 10,000*l.* per week, could not have been introduced without the assistance of the trade unions. Were it not for the fact that masters and men can bargain on comparatively equal terms, any alteration of conditions adverse to the men would be received with unendurable friction or even rioting. Advance of wages made in times of prosperity could never be withdrawn in times of adversity without its being supposed that advantage was being taken of the helpless condition of the men. In fact, powerful unions establish a condition of stability which Dr. Shadwell regards as a source of industrial strength to England, giving her an advantage over Germany and America, where they are less developed but universally feared and hated by the manufacturers.

The other main function of trade unions—that of benefit societies—is unquestionably admirable. The Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws points out that the unions spend considerably over half a million pounds per annum on unemployed benefit alone. They thus act as insurance societies against unemployment; and, in doing so, have, as we shall see later, struck upon what is about the only radical cure possible for unemployment. The fact, which Dr. Shadwell notes, that the miners make very little provision for unemployed benefit is doubtless due to the fact that there is scarcely any unemployment among them, owing to their habit of meeting the normal fluctuations of industry by shortening the number of working hours in a week. In short, the trade unions, however pernicious their action may occasionally be, perform several necessary and

useful parts in industrial life, and cannot but be admired for the completeness and ubiquity of their organisation among the working classes.

We now have to consider a work of a very different kind, Mr. Hobson's 'Industrial System,' which he himself describes as 'an inquiry into earned and unearned income.' Mr. Hobson pushes to its extreme limit the principle of taxation of unearned increment. But what is unearned increment? To this question a great part of the book is devoted. The costs of a business are defined as the payments necessary to maintain the current output at its present size. These payments include, of course, the reward of ability and management, as well as interest on capital and the wages of labour. But the value of the product usually exceeds the amount of the costs, thus giving rise to a 'surplus.' This surplus is divided by Mr. Hobson into two parts—productive and unproductive surplus. The productive surplus is that which has an effect in increasing the quantity or improving the quality of the output. It is the surplus accruing to any form of production that induces capitalists to bring into existence further instruments for increasing the quantity of the production; and in so far as the surplus effects this object it is productive surplus. The costs, too, represent the minimum sum which has to be paid to a man for the use of his labour. But it may be that a higher price than this minimum sum would induce a higher degree of efficiency; and the 'surplus' paid in this way to the workman would be classified as 'productive surplus.' Unproductive surplus, on the other hand, is that which evokes no further increase in the quantity, or improvement in the quality, of the product. It is a dead loss as far as the industrial system is concerned. There is a point beyond which no further prospect of returns can induce the capitalist to apply his wealth more insistently than he already does; no further increase of wages can evoke a higher efficiency on the part of the workman. Beyond this point all further receipts rank as unproductive surplus, and are 'the principal source not 'merely of waste, but of economic malady.' The whole of the economic rent of land falls, of course, in the category of unproductive surplus. No increase of rent would evoke an increased use of the land; no decrease of rent would diminish the quantity of the land employed. The unproductive surplus, in fact, represents the monopoly value of one or more of the factors of production. It is the price paid, not in response to industrial demand, but to a fortuitous scarcity, which may be natural, as in the case of land; or artificial, as where trusts and combinations are at work. But whatever its origin, Mr. Hobson regards

it as wholly deleterious and as the proper object for the entire body of taxation to fall upon.

Various criticisms may be made on this scheme, both with respect to its fundamental principles and with respect to its practical workability. There is first the difficulty of stating what surplus is and what is not unproductive. The case of land is the only case in which the unproductiveness of the surplus is clearly established. From the purely economic point of view, there seems no objection to taxing land up to the full amount of its rent. It cannot, like capital, be exported to a foreign country, nor is its quantity susceptible of being reduced by a heavy burden of taxation. But the same thing cannot be said of any form of capital that is mobile or liable to increase or decrease by human agency. The distinction between productive and unproductive surplus appears largely artificial and difficult to maintain. There may be a broad distinction between the two, but we doubt whether the distinction would be clear enough or sharp enough to provide a sound principle of taxation. Moreover, Mr. Hobson himself insists upon the maxim that all taxation, wherever it may in the first instance be imposed, is ultimately shifted off and borne entirely by unproductive surplus. If this is so, why resort to any special measures for singling out the unproductive surplus for immediate taxation? To this Mr. Hobson replies that the process of shifting is wasteful and injurious. It may be; but the disregard of any other principle of taxation than that of hunting out unearned increment is likely to carry with it results no less injurious. Even though minimum wages or other cost of production may have no capacity for bearing a tax, but simply pass it on to the employer or other owner of unearned income, it may yet be wise to impose the tax originally upon the costs. According to Mr. Hobson's own theory, the labourer will suffer no permanent harm; he will not pay the tax; but he will think he is paying it, which for many purposes is quite as important. 'Representation without taxation' is a very dangerous principle to advocate, and can only lead to extreme national extravagance; it is desirable that people should learn to hesitate before embarking upon projects of expensive social reform or costly wars. We cannot admit Mr. Hobson's premises that taxation should be imposed in such a way as may least be felt, and be least disorganising. We think a far sounder principle is to impose it so as to bring home to every elector the responsibility which rests upon him in casting a vote; and that responsibility can only be brought home if the tax itself is felt by the voter. If the tax is, as Mr. Hobson says, not really borne by him but by his employer, so much the better. There

is then comparatively little advantage in taxing the employer directly and a great disadvantage in the loss of the sense of responsibility involved.

Another point deserves notice. Mr. Hobson himself remarks upon it. It may be true that the economic rent of land has a very special ability to bear a tax ; it is no less true that it would be a grievous injustice to the present owners of land if they were to be singled out from among other capitalists for taxation. We have to consider not only the economic aspect, but the customs and conventions prevailing in our country at the present time. It has been customary for a long time past to regard land as one form of capital, and investors have put their money readily into land or other property under the impression that the two things were interchangeable, and that they were merely laying out their money in what appeared to them the best investment. Now if the Legislature, on the strength of economic doctrine, were suddenly to proclaim that land differs *in toto* from other forms of capital, it might be giving utterance to a profound truth ; but if it were to put the implied policy into practice and promptly create a large land tax it would be guilty of a disregard of settled customs and habits of thought which might throw the whole country into extreme social disorganisation.* It would be no defence to say that the past customs are founded upon an economic error. Legislation must be judged by its results, and the results in this case would be to create a rankling feeling of injustice among a large class of the people, and to deal a blow at credit and the feeling of security which might be in the highest degree disastrous. In the government of a country, the economic is only one among many other factors that have to be considered, sometimes less but often more important in their urgency. We do not attribute to Mr. Hobson any such crude proposal as that outlined above, though we think that here and there his book is open to the criticism, which indeed may be directed against almost any large body of theories, in social matters, that are derived by deductive reasoning from a handful of general principles, viz. that all the factors in the situation are not invariably

* It seems, however, perfectly justifiable for the Government to give notice that in future they intend to differentiate between land and capital, and forthwith to place a tax on unearned increment in the value of the land dating from the moment at which the notice was given. There can be no reasonable hostility to this measure on grounds of principle ; though it may be opposed on the grounds that the heavy expenditure involved in valuing the land would not be justified by the amount of revenue derived from the tax. This is a question for the consideration of politicians.

allowed for. As a case in point, we may mention Mr. Hobson's advocacy of abandoning the practice of collecting income-tax at the source, and substituting 'a personal collection enforced 'by compulsory declaration of all incomes, and adequate penal-'ties for failure to comply.' This surely is a wholly gratuitous substitution of inquisitorial for milder methods, besides being an incentive to dishonesty on the part of the declarer. Mr. Hobson forgets the factor of human nature. The very existence of police and judges shows that dishonesty is prevalent. Why, then, institute a system which places a premium on dishonesty?

The tendency which all government interference has to promote dishonesty is not enough recognised at the present time. Dr. Shadwell points out that legislative attempts to prevent betting lead to bribery of the inspectors appointed to execute the law. Protection notoriously brings with it extreme corruption and in various minor ways it leads to deceitfulness. In Australia, for instance, there is at present a 1*l.* import duty on bicycles. British manufacturers circumvent the duty by exporting their machines in parts, keeping an agent in Australia to put the parts together on their arrival.*

We observe that some attempt has been made to represent Mr. Hobson in the light of the philosopher of the modern Liberal party, and the book now before us as the philosophic justification of Mr. Lloyd George's Budget. Regarded in that light, the book must be highly commended. If we cannot altogether agree with its principles, neither do we agree with the principles of modern Liberal finance. If we find it in places dull and uninspiring, it is also the case that we can discover nothing exhilarating about the political aspirations of modern Liberals. It is well that an economic foundation of Liberalism should be attempted, and we gladly admit that Mr. Hobson has executed a somewhat difficult task with as much success as the circumstances permitted.

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* That underhand methods require no encouragement is all too true. At Blackburn not long ago, we saw cotton cloth being woven, which was saturated with 'size' to such an extent that 63–70 per cent. of the weight of the manufactured article was due to this liquid alone. The cloth so produced has a thick white colour, giving a superficial appearance of very fine quality; but after it has been in water once or twice, the size is all washed out, and nothing remains but the slender cotton foundation, poor in colour, and of very light weight. This cloth is exported to India, to be sold to the natives, who, being inadequately versed in European morals, are deluded by the colour and weight of the cloth into the belief that they are purchasing a fabric of high quality.

We now come to the important and interesting problem of Unemployment, so thoroughly and ably treated by Mr. Beveridge. And let us first take note of the fact that unemployment is not, as many people imagine, on the increase. In the years 1867, 1878–9, 1886, 1893–4 there was distress closely corresponding to that of more recent years, and the high-water mark of unemployment was reached in 1879, when no less than 10.7 per cent. of the members of trade unions were out of employment—a percentage which has never since been approached. If we hear more about unemployment now than was heard then it is either because the unemployed are now better organised and able to force themselves more on public attention or because there exists now a more intense spirit of philanthropic sentiment and a more earnest desire for a cure than formerly prevailed. But is 'cure' the right word to use? Is unemployment truly a disease of the organism, or merely an unsightly adjunct of its healthy working? Is the problem before us a pathological or only a physiological problem?

That it was pathological in character was until lately the universal assumption. The habit of politicians is to assume that everything that is unpleasant in social life must be a disease, that every disease must have a remedy, that the remedy is simple and obvious, and that all that has to be done is to take it up and apply it without delay. Every one of these propositions is totally false. Things that are unpleasant are often normal and necessary; when they are not so they are often incapable of a cure; if there is a cure it is usually neither simple nor obvious. However, the ordinary mode of political procedure is to act first and think afterwards. The thinking does not begin until it has been discovered that the action has done no good, or else has done harm. The case of unemployment well exemplifies this common routine. First there comes a loud outcry, in a year of exceptional depression, which brings the whole subject suddenly before the public attention. Immediately action of every kind is taken. The municipalities start relief works; they turn on hordes of useless men to perform almost or entirely useless work, costing large sums in wages; labour colonies are founded, charity is promiscuously abused, a Right to Work Bill is brought into the House of Commons, and an Unemployed Workmen's Bill actually passes into law. In the course of a year or two it becomes plain that one and all of these measures have dismally failed. Taxes, rates and charity have all been drawn upon, and the problem of unemployment remains just where it was at first. At this stage in the proceedings the thinking begins. It occurs to some people to make inquiries

into the causes of unemployment, and, after a careful study, they find that no hope is to be expected from the measures which have hitherto been applied, but they are able to put forward new suggestions of a much more reasonable and hopeful kind. It is in this position that matters rest at the present moment. It is in this position that it now becomes worth our while to enter upon a discussion of the proper treatment of the subject.

What, then, is the origin of unemployment? It may be pathological, and imply a permanent deficiency in the demand for labour, due either to a larger population than the surface of the land can support, or to an excessive increase of capital, which results in the work of the country being done to an increasing extent by machines and to a decreasing extent by men. But Mr. Beveridge shows that nothing of the sort is happening. The demand for labour, so far from falling, is continually rising. As evidence of this, he shows that wages, which are the price of labour, have steadily increased for many years past. That this is not due to trade union action is indicated by the fact that the increase has not been confined to skilled workmen, but has extended to labourers who are wholly unorganised, and the cost of whose labour is regulated solely by the urgency of the demand. New industries are continually opening out, creating new demands for labour, yet the problem of unemployment still goes on. The increasing urgency of the demand for labour has been accompanied by no corresponding diminution of unemployment, nor will a rising demand for labour be any cure for unemployment. 'The paradox has to be faced—that the creation or provision of 'work is the one thing that is no remedy for unemployment.' Its existence is, as we shall shortly show, due to the defective manner in which the demand expresses itself. The problem is one of maladjustment between the supply of and the demand for labour, and its solution can only be found by seeking the causes of this maladjustment.*

* Since we are here dealing only with reasoned and studied facts, and not with the blind-action system of politicians, it is almost superfluous to refer to the allegation that Protection would be a cure for unemployment. But incidentally we may point out that this theory is altogether disposed of by the conclusion now reached, and set forth above. The idea of the tariff reformers is that an import duty would cause commodities to be manufactured more extensively in this country, thus increasing the demand for labour, and diminishing unemployment. Whatever may be thought of the first of these asseverations, it is certain that the second of them is untrue. An increasing permanent demand for labour does *not* diminish unemployment.

The causes of the maladjustment are several. There are the seasonal and cyclical fluctuations of industry; there is the necessary reserve of labour attendant upon the different trades; there is the displacement here and there of some hand trade by new machinery, which, though it may in the long run bring more employment, inflicts a temporary hardship on the displaced individuals; there is perhaps a deficiency of industrial training; and there are the unemployables—persons whose age, health, or moral characters render them useless in the industrial system. With each of these factors Mr. Beveridge deals in turn.

Seasonal fluctuation presents but little difficulty. It is a normal and necessary incident in the carrying on of various trades. Building, for instance, is most active between April and October. Printing attains its greatest volume of business in March, July, and November. Furnishing flourishes during the spring, and is slack for the remainder of the year. In the intermediate months, the unemployed percentages of the trade unions show a regular increase, and fall again as regularly when the busy season comes on. Anything tending to regularise the fluctuation would of course abolish to that extent this particular factor in unemployment. But since they are recurrent at known intervals, the question is, as Mr. Beveridge points out, one of wages rather than employment. The wages received during the busy times must be saved to cover the slack times; and the rate of wages should not be reckoned as the amount received when trade is most active, but as the average amount spread over one year. The amount received during busy times is usually fully sufficient to tide over slack times; but if it were not, the industry could not be considered as self-supporting; it would be a case of sweating, requiring to be promptly taken in hand by the trade unions. We attach little weight to the suggestion that men belonging to trades which are subject to seasonal fluctuation should learn a second trade. It is expecting too much from the men, and would not conduce to great efficiency in either trade.

Cyclical fluctuation presents greater difficulties. Industry, as Mr. Beveridge well puts it, pulsates with an alternate diastole and systole. Industrial expansion is not uniform; seven fat years are followed by seven lean years, which again give way to fat years. The periods of depression are felt in the minutest details of national life; the periods of prosperity are equally embracing. Thus we find the years of deepest depression to have been 1868, 1879, 1886, 1894, 1904. In these years, the bank-rate was low, foreign trade slack, the marriage-rate reduced, consumption of beer, promotion of companies, &c., all below the normal. Indeed so inter-related are all these various activities

that it is possible to form, for instance, a pretty close estimate of the marriage-rate by merely inspecting the current bank-rate. Between these years of depression there are years of expansion and prosperity. Of course the employment curve follows closely the alternate expansion and contraction of industry. The years of diminished activity are years of exceptional unemployment and distress.

Is it unreasonable to treat the unemployment arising from cyclical fluctuations simply as a question of wages, as in the case of seasonal fluctuation? We think not. Certainly, taking the average workman as he is, it is hardly likely that many of them will have sufficient providence to anticipate bad years consciously, and lay by sufficient to carry them through the depressed period. But though they may not do it directly for themselves, they may do it, and as we have already seen actually do do it, indirectly through the agency of the trade unions. Mr. Beveridge points out that the premium payable for unemployed benefit 'on a fairly liberal scale and in some of the most 'fluctuating industries' amounts only to from $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ to $7d.$ a week per member. There can be no question that this is well within the means of the workers in skilled trades. We believe it also to be within the means of labourers at large; but unfortunately they are not organised in trade unions, and are not in contact with any other association which would be prepared to effect the insurance for them. Here, then, seems a promising line of reform. Let associations be established which shall act as insurance agencies for the unorganised labourers. Let the State stand at the back of these agencies; let it even subsidise them, so as to increase the amount of the benefit, or diminish the premium. If this were done, it would of course be necessary to subsidise the benefit departments of trade unions, and of any other bodies which carry out similar work. But to this subject we shall recur shortly.

A further method of meeting cyclical fluctuations is to reduce the number of hours or of days worked in a week. When the quantity of output has to be diminished, it may either be done by dismissing a certain percentage of the employees, thus giving rise to unemployment, or by reducing the hours worked by all the employees, so that the loss falls upon all the members of the trade alike, instead of being concentrated upon a few. This plan is adopted in coal-mining, with the result that there is no unemployment at all from this source among miners. It has lately been adopted also in the cotton trade. It is, however, open to one formidable objection. When employers have to dismiss some proportion of their men, they naturally choose the least efficient,

so that a not unwelcome opportunity is afforded them of carrying out a healthy purging process in their businesses. It appears to us on the whole more desirable to allow the burden of depressed industry to be borne wholly by the least valuable members of a trade, than to adopt means for spreading it over good and bad alike.

After full weight has been allowed to the influence of industrial fluctuations in producing unemployment, it transpires that other factors are still at work. The unemployed percentage in the trade unions moves up and down ; but however busy the season, however prosperous the trade, it never reaches zero. There is an irreducible minimum of unemployment which apparently can never be passed. On this point Mr. Beveridge's treatment is remarkably lucid. Of this irreducible minimum, probably only a very small fraction are permanently unemployed, this fraction consisting of wastrels and parasites upon society. By far the greater number of the unemployed, however, are casual labourers, getting two or three days' work a week, but not sufficient to earn a respectable livelihood. Their trouble is, not unemployment, but under-employment. At the London docks, for instance, the amount of work to be done varies from day to day according as the ships happen to come in or go out. Men are taken on at the wharf gates just as they are required, and dismissed as soon as the job for which they were engaged is finished. In this way there tends to collect at the gates of each wharf the maximum number of men ever employed at that wharf. On comparatively few days in the year is there sufficient employment for all the candidates, and unemployment is necessitated on all the days when there is not. At every wharf in the London docks there tends to assemble a similar reserve of labourers waiting for a job. Now it is certain that all the wharves will not be at their busiest at the same moment. There is therefore at the very best a small percentage of unemployed on any particular day which can never be reduced. 'For work requiring, if concen-'trated at one spot, ninety-eight men, there will actually be 'eighty in regular employment and twenty in irregular employ-'ment ; there will be a hundred in all, so that at all times two 'at least are out of work.' It is inevitable that a little time should be lost between one job and another, and it is this interval between successive jobs that accounts for the bulk of unemployment. It is not a case of the chronic idleness of a few, but of under-employment of many. How is this difficulty to be met ?

Supposing the various wharves to be in free communication with a central exchange from which all obtained their labour,

the reserve of men necessary to cope with any contingency would be considerably lower than if each wharf maintained its own separate reserve. For, since all the wharves are not at their busiest at the same moment, the total number of men employed on the busiest day in the entire London docks would be smaller than the sum of the numbers of men employed at each wharf on its own particular day of greatest activity. The establishment of a labour exchange, therefore, from which men could be drafted off at a moment's notice to any spot where they were wanted would diminish the numbers of the reserve necessary, and increase to a corresponding extent the regularity of employment to those who remained.

The principle of labour exchanges was recognised by the Government in the Labour Exchanges Act of last session. The Act appears to have been framed on right lines, though it is not to be expected that it will do more than alleviate to some extent the friction which must inevitably occur in passing from one job to another. The problem is the de-casualisation of employment, the promotion of fluidity or mobility of labour; and the setting up of exchanges is all that can be done in this direction.

Labour exchanges have been objected to by many far-sighted students of social affairs on the ground that the working classes are certain to come to regard them before long as existing for the purpose of creating employment whenever it is needed. It is thus feared that they may give encouragement to the dangerous fallacy of the 'right to work,' leading to a repetition of the tragedies which followed the inauguration of the *ateliers nationaux* in 1848. There is no doubt much force in this criticism, and the utmost circumspection will have to be used in working these labour exchanges to make it clear to workmen that it is not the function of the exchanges to create jobs, but only to put men in contact with any jobs that happen to be going. Seeing that the Board of Trade has appointed Mr. Beveridge himself to administer the Act, there is for the present no fear that this cardinal principle will be overlooked, for no one knows better the dire results which must ensue, if the notion was allowed to become current that every man was entitled to a job on asking for it.

What is to happen to those men who are deprived of work altogether by this movement? The organisation of the labour market through the medium of labour exchanges, while permitting trade to be carried on with a smaller reserve of labour, gives rise to a surplus for whom there is no work to be had. These will either be absorbed at other points into the industrial system, or will fall upon the Poor Law, or may be provided for

by means of labour colonies or some such temporary expedient. For whatever expedient be adopted need only be temporary. When once the surplus of men, caused by the sudden change of industrial method, has been disposed of, no further surplus will appear. Each portion of the industrial structure draws to itself as many men as are required to work it with a sufficient reserve, *and no more.* As we have already pointed out, there is no deficiency in the demand for labour as a whole, but solely in the apportionment of the supply to the demand. The problem in this case is much the same as that in the case of the sudden displacement of a hand trade by machinery. The men displaced are for the most part too old and fixed in their habits to be capable of learning a new trade or of being absorbed again into the industrial system. Mankind at large gain by the change ; probably in course of time employment itself is increased by it : but the immediate effect is to throw out of employment those who depended upon the discarded method. They are, in the words of John Stuart Mill, ' sacrificed to the gains of their fellow-citizens ' and of prosperity.' Here, as before, the surplus of men is purely temporary and consequent upon a change of industrial structure. When once it has been disposed of, no new surplus will arise. It may be right to take charitable measures for their relief, but they have nothing to do with the general question of organic unemployment which we have been considering.

With regard to the personal qualities of the unemployed, they are found to contain a few unemployables, who should be dealt with under the Poor Law, but to consist mainly of men who are quite able and willing to work, though less efficient as a rule than the men who keep their employment with greater regularity. In a way, their unemployment is not their own fault. However efficient the proletariate might be, there must always exist unemployment. But the persons selected for dismissal naturally being the least efficient, it happens that the unemployed are on the whole considerably less efficient than the employed. The demoralisation caused by unemployment itself accentuates still further this comparative inefficiency.

The failure of all the earlier attempts to cope with unemployment is due to an erroneous estimate of its causes. It was supposed that the total volume of the demand for labour was insufficient, and that the proper remedy for the disease was to increase the demand. The old fallacy—that more employment is needed—is still industriously propagated by the tariff reformers, but among people who have no political ends to serve it is now well-nigh exploded. Afforestation, relief works, and many other schemes for creating employment have been suggested

or attempted, and in the latter case have uniformly failed. The Unemployed Workmen's Act of 1905 failed for this reason. The relief works instituted under its provisions were founded on the assumption that the unemployed were a permanent body of surplus workers, instead of being a collection of continually shifting individuals, acting as an industrial reserve, in employment one day and out of it the next. Moreover it has been found impossible to make relief works less desirable than ordinary occupations. If they are to be sufficient to provide the workman with a bare livelihood, they will be as attractive as many occupations carried on by those who have secured employment for themselves. Men pour into such relief works as soon as distress comes upon them, and find no inducement to leave them again.

The evils of charity are vividly described by Mr. Beveridge :

'The danger of subsidising casual employment by public or private relief without improving the conditions of the casual labourer is a very real one. . . . People who would be aghast at charity or public assistance given to a man in receipt of low wages, are quite ready to help an "unemployed" casual labourer, though the ultimate effect must be to lower the average share of work required for subsistence and thus increase the number of casual labourers till a fresh equilibrium is reached at that lower level. It is obvious that the perennial stream of charity descending upon the riverside labourer and his wife, and becoming a deluge at Christmas or on the birth of a new baby, is a great convenience to the industry which needs his occasional services and frequent attendance. It amounts to nothing more or less than a subsidy to a system of careless and demoralising employment. The bulk of the relief work doled out winter after winter by municipalities has the same economic character. Casual employment, in fact, makes possible a widespread form of the "grant in aid of wages" far more dangerous, because far more insidious, than the direct forms which were the object lessons of the old Poor Law. The new subsidy works, not by lowering the rates of pay, but by making labour immobile and so increasing irregularity of earning.'

The expense of relief works is well known. In London, the Central (Unemployed) Body 'spent over 58,000*l.* on works subsequently valued at less than 13,500*l.*' In Glasgow 9977*l.* was spent on work valued at 3045*l.* 'In Govan the value of the work done in 1906–7 varied from 33.3 to 66.6 per cent. of the wages paid.' 'In Portsmouth the cost of unemployed labour is put at three times that of ordinary labour.' The value of the work done never comes up to the value of the wages paid. Not only is it exceedingly dear and usually of little utility, but it is almost always very badly done. The third report of the

Central Body for London, issued in October 1909, and covering the work of two years, acknowledges the failure of relief works. It says :

' Temporary relief work cannot under any circumstances prove satisfactory. . . . The work fails to attract the best type of unemployed. The men the Central Body desire to help are those who are never really reached by the distress committees,—i.e., the deserving, strong, useful workmen out of employment, temporarily, and not chronically, for whom the Act was undoubtedly passed. The Central Body's operations seem for the most part only to reach the second class, those deficient in physique or capacity to work.'

Mr. Beveridge finally rejects the possibility of curing unemployment by State aid. Unemployment should be regarded ' not as a thing standing by itself—an inexplicable excrescence ' on the industrial system—but as a thing directly related to that ' system and as necessary to it as are capital and labour themselves.' He advocates two fundamental principles for dealing with the problem ; firstly, the setting up of labour exchanges, and secondly, insurance. To organise the labour market by bringing supply and demand together with the least possible friction, enables industry to be carried on with a smaller reserve, and gets rid of casual employment as far as industrial conditions will allow. The suggestion has already been carried into effect by the Labour Exchanges Act passed in 1909. The second principle—insurance—has been widely adopted by the trade unions, and with marked success.

' The system of trade union benefits probably does more than any other existing agency to provide against distress through want of employment. It does this without injury to self-respect and at a cost which in comparison to the effect produced is extremely small. It has the outstanding merit of flexibility. By substituting collective for individual saving it shifts on to each trade, as a whole, part of the burden of the necessary margin of idleness.'

In the special report prepared by Mr. Cyril Jackson and the Rev. J. C. Pringle on unemployment, and issued as Appendix Volume XIX. to the Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws [Cd. 4795], the investigators say : ' There is no doubt ' that the trade union arrangements for unemployed benefit are ' excellent, and that an extension of such a system till it em- ' braced all workers except those who ought to be left to the ' Poor Law would do away with the need of any relief funds.' And the report proceeds to dilate on the terrible evils resulting from giving out doles of work, whether by charity, municipalities

or distress committees. The Unemployed Workmen's Act, by systematising relief works, has simply 'intensified the evil.' Insurance is, in our opinion, an admirable method of meeting not only unemployment but a large number of other social afflictions as well. The Government has already expressed its intention of introducing a Bill for providing facilities for insurance against unemployment, in the next Session. Mr. Beveridge's recommendations have met with the widest agreement, and bid fair to be soon adopted in full.

We may here take the opportunity of drawing attention to what is called the 'Ghent' system of insurance, under which a subsidy is granted to trade unions or other associations which insure their members against unemployment. The effect of the subsidy is to increase the amount of the benefit that the premium will secure. In various ways the Legislature now occupies itself in taxing the community as a whole, for the purpose of subsidising the poorer section of it. Old-age pensions, of which the principle was accepted by both parties, is a type of the legislation now popular for altering the national distribution of wealth. We have from time to time examined the foundations of this policy, and have no intention here of going over the same ground again. We may look upon it as a practical fact, and turn our attention to ascertaining what mode of carrying out the redistribution of wealth is likely to be attended with the smallest dangers. We have no hesitation in stating our belief that by far the wisest and least dangerous course is to be found in a wide extension of the Ghent system of insurance. When a man puts aside week by week a small sum, saved out of his wages, to protect himself from the risk of sickness, of old age, of unemployment, &c., he shows himself to be a man deserving of any help the State may think fit to give him, and not likely to be demoralised by receiving money for which he has not worked. The stock argument against State charity, namely, that it penalises and discourages thrift, is by this system reversed. So far from involving a tax on thrift, the Ghent system is nothing else than a subsidy to thrift. We cannot but consider it a grave national misfortune that some such system as this was not adopted in the case of old-age pensions.

If the desirability of redistributing wealth be conceded, there are two main policies, alternative to the Ghent system, by which such redistribution may be effected. The first of these is that adopted for old-age pensions—an indiscriminate subsidising of everyone who happens to be in want. It is defended on the ground that any contributory scheme, or any conditions as to insurance, would exclude from its benefits all those who were

so poor that they were unable to contribute anything for themselves, and that these are just the people who stand in most need of assistance. To this there are two replies. The first is that it is not true that there is any but a very minute section of the people that is so poor as to be wholly unable to help itself. Insurance means at the most only a few pennies a week, which could almost everywhere be saved out of the drink bill or other unnecessaries, and which in any case is actually less than the rise of wages that has taken place in recent years. The second answer is that no mistake can be more disastrous than to carry out legislation with a single view to benefiting the weak and inefficient. The old rule holds good now, as it always has done —*you cannot bestow advantages on any particular section of the community without increasing the size of that section.* Just as charity creates paupers, so does a subsidy to the weak create weaklings. In fact, a sum of money devoted to the relief of inefficients may be said to constitute a demand for inefficients; and the supply will be strictly proportional to the demand. It is silly to shed tears over the fact that we have among us persons who are too weak and inefficient to be able to help themselves. In a great nation of over forty millions what else can be expected? Is it not visionary and foolish to suppose that we can ever abolish this small residue? Have we not a Poor Law, intended solely to provide for their needs? And are we to alter our course of legislation, and embark upon a system of universal coddling, merely to save a few paupers from the degradation of applying for public relief? But it is superfluous to argue against such a policy. It has not a shred of reason behind it; it is the outcome of a maudlin and uncontrolled sentiment. For persons who shudder at the thought of pain and suffering, arguments are useless. They stand in need rather of a nerve tonic, which may brace their systems to look without fear on the unpleasant, as well as on the pleasant, sides of our existence.

The other alternative to the Ghent system is that which was adopted in Germany at the instance of Kaiser Wilhelm I. for old age and sickness—namely, compulsory insurance—the workmen, the employers, and the State all contributing to the funds. We have no good word to say for this system. The compulsory system, so popular and natural in Germany, is profoundly unsuited to the people of this country. Moreover we believe not only that it would fail in practice, but that in principle it is totally wrong. If we are compelled by law to be thrifty, our actions will no doubt display thrift. But it is not the action that matters, it is the motive that prompts the action. The

desideratum is to produce a state of mind such that a man of his own accord practises thrift; and that state of mind can only be produced by allowing him to experience to the full the pains and penalties which follow extravagance. Compulsory thrift has no disciplinary effect on the mind. It relieves the man of making the moral effort to save, it loses for him the improvement in character accompanying such moral effort, it shields him from the penalties which moral weakness would naturally bring. Although the action may be made thrifty by law, the mind is left thriftless and undisciplined. In a people who are by nature thrifty it may be possible to dispense with this discipline without much danger. But where a people are naturally thriftless it would, we fear, be a calamity of the first order if they were to be relieved of the necessity of having continually to curb their tendencies to extravagance. There could be no instance more illustrative of the danger that would ensue from attempting to transplant a German institution to this country. We earnestly trust that the proposals of the Government promised for next Session will not include any such folly as this.

To the Ghent system, then, on a voluntary basis, every argument from economics or from common-sense converges. That labour exchanges and insurance together will abolish the evil of unemployment we do not for one moment imagine. But that they will reduce the evil to the narrowest limits that industrial conditions admit of, we conceive to be a conclusion that is beyond question.

We have now completed our survey of the industrial system as it exists at present. Is it possible to draw any wide, general conclusions as a result of our examination? Is it possible, in particular, to form an opinion whether we are, as a nation, on the up grade or the down grade, to determine whether we are progressing and improving, as a few believe to be the case, or whether we are deteriorating and losing our moral strength, as many believe to be the case? Such an inquiry far exceeds in difficulty anything that we have yet touched. We are so enthralled by the facts of the present day that it is scarcely possible to exaggerate the difficulty of calling before our minds the facts of an earlier day, and forming a just comparison between the two. But one thing may be confidently stated: the mere fact that a large majority of people have hazy notions that we are on the down grade is of no value whatever in arriving at a conclusion. It has always happened since the beginning of the universe that men have under-estimated the greatness of their

own times. Old men think the days of their youth were better days than now. The generation of to-day thinks that the generation of yesterday was greater than itself. That wonderful observer of human nature, Sir Thomas Browne, did not overlook this tendency of mankind to depreciate their own times. In his 'Pseudodoxia Epidemica' he remarks:

'Men that adore times past consider not that those times were once present. . . . Which very absurdity is daily committed amongst us, even in the esteem and censure of our own times. And, to speak impartially, old men, from whom we should expect the greatest example of wisdom, do most exceed in this point of folly; commending the days of their youth, which they scarce remember, at least well understood not, extolling those times their younger years have heard their fathers condemn, and condemning those times the gray heads of their posterity shall commend. And thus it is the humour of many heads, to extol the days of their forefathers, and declaim against the wickedness of times present.'

Self-depreciation extends even to the physical condition of the people. The outcry about physical deterioration resulted in the appointment of a committee to investigate the matter; and its report, issued in July 1904, established, of course, that there was no evidence of any such deterioration. Yet the allegation continues to be made. The first requisite for forming a true opinion of the greatness of our age is to estimate and allow for the bias which we are liable to. Let us therefore exercise the utmost caution before admitting evidence against our own times.

In the evolution of the last quarter of a century one fact stands out as pre-eminently striking. There has been in every department of our national existence an increase in the spirit of collectivism. We use the word in no invidious sense, meaning only to imply that there has been a growth of the sentiment which ties individuals together, the mass sentiment or feeling of solidarity and unity of interest among large numbers of people. So far from saying anything against this sentiment, we conceive that standing by itself it represents pure gain. An increase of fellow-feeling and collective solidarity makes for strength and progress, unless, of course, it should be accompanied by evils which more than counterbalance it. In politics the collectivist spirit is extraordinarily rife. We see it in what is called Socialism, the increasing sense of responsibility of the community as a whole for its poor, aged, or weakly members. We see it equally in the intense nationalism of the present day; in Imperialism and the Imperial spirit, which

loves the spectacle of vast nations closely integrated into a single whole and animated by a common purpose ; in patriotism, which assuredly is far greater now than it has been for many generations back, carrying with it, as it does, a satisfaction at the spectacle of a man 'serving his country,' 'existing for 'the benefit of the community.' The keen insistence of the one party on patriotism and Imperialism, and of the other party on Socialism, are alike indications of the sentiment of solidarity and collectivism which we have indicated. We do not deny that this general strengthening of social sentiments has been accompanied with some increase of anti-social sentiments. Nationalism, for instance, brings with it a feeling of opposition and antagonism to foreign nations, which in former times was less marked. But this constitutes no exception to our main proposition ; it is, on the contrary, a vindication of it. For the patriotic sentiments live on a comparison of ourselves with foreign nations. They would have no force or body without a constant rivalry and jealousy to feed them. The strength of the sentiment of solidarity itself does not depend on the magnitude of the sphere through which it acts. That is an intellectual rather than an emotional function. Among pastoral tribes, the feeling of solidarity is intense, but it extends only to the members of the family. With us it has a wider sphere ; it extends to the nation as a whole, or to a federation of nations into an empire. With a higher intellectual developement, it would undoubtedly embrace all the peoples of the earth. But still the fact remains that the strength of the sentiment itself is independent of the magnitude of the sphere through which it operates.

We have, then, this solid fact to work upon. There has been a rapid and conspicuous increase of social fellow-feeling in the last quarter of a century. To what causes may it be attributed ? Probably the universal ability to read has had much to do with it. The spread of cheap newspapers awakens everywhere an interest in the sayings and doings of other people. Even where the news provided is of the vulgarest description, such, for instance, as the accounts of football matches, on which live most of the local newspapers in the north of England, there is a continued interest in the doings of the various teams, a sympathetic following of careers in which no personal interest is involved. The same interest is shared by large numbers of people spread over wide areas, and creates a spirit of community or fellow-feeling such as we have already described. Increased facilities for travelling have doubtless had an effect in integrating the units of a society, welding them into a more compact whole. The electric telegraph also annihilates space, and brings home

forcibly to the individual the fact that he is but a unit in a small corner of the world, and not the centre of the universe. The telegraph also acts by infecting one country with the sentiments momentarily prevailing in another. A war-scare in England is speedily communicated to the colonies : sympathetic messages are flashed back from them ; and for a few days the entire empire is swayed by a common sentiment. The electric telegraph, if not a main factor, is at any rate a condition of modern Imperialism. Then, again, it brings foreign nations into far more immediate contact with one another, and thus tends to level their differences and establish greater equality. The agitation in this country for introducing German institutions could not take place if no knowledge existed as to what German institutions were. On these and doubtless other similar factors does the increasing collectivism of the day depend. Not in politics, not in debates in the House of Commons, not in the passage of this or that measure, do the great social movements take their origin. They arise from circumstances wholly unforeseen ; they are not caused by politicians, though they gain expression through politicians, as through numberless other agencies.

Standing alone, collectivism is a wholly admirable trait. Why, then, are we led to believe that the nation is entering upon a period of decadence ? We are told that it is an age of little men. It is difficult to say whether the charge is true, for no age ever recognises its own great men. But even if it is true, that is no evidence of a change for the worse. It rests upon the pessimists to show that an age of great men combined with great ignorance and distress is superior to an age which has no great men but a far higher average of prosperity. Again, it is said that individual liberty has been tampered with—a serious charge. But is it altogether true ? Law undoubtedly interferes more with individual freedom than it did in the mid-Victorian era ; but it is apt to be forgotten that custom and conventions are wholly as tyrannical and much more unreasonable than law. The stringency of custom has undoubtedly relaxed, and probably as great individual liberty may now be enjoyed as has ever existed in the history of England. The slackening of the insidious bondage of custom is well worth a tightening of the bondage of law.

Whereas it is certain that many of the charges levelled against our times are devoid of foundation, there are others which have to be admitted. The blackest cloud on our horizon is the hostile sentiments felt towards foreign nations, and the constant danger of war, involving as it does the setting aside of vast

quantities of capital and of men from productive occupations, and the fostering of the anti-social instincts of militarism among the people. We must recognise, then, that the step we have taken towards increased socialisation carries with it many dangers. It is an emotional frame of mind, and thereby antagonistic to a calm intellectual disposition of our affairs. In the Victorian age, the spirit of the times was mainly intellectual; the people were usually able to hold their sentiments in check and manage their affairs wisely and well. An advance of collective sentiment, though good in itself, brings with it the risk of outrunning intellectual control. The thing needed is, not to go back on the emotional advance, but to hasten forward the intellectual control which corresponds to it. And on every side we see symptoms that intellectual control is steadily advancing. The evils of unchecked sentiment are everywhere securing recognition. There is a spirit of determination and hard work spreading abroad among the people. The demand for luxuries and dissipation is growing less, application to business is growing greater. It is possible that before long general recognition may be accorded to the great lesson of history, that no nation in the history of the world has ever yet deteriorated from hard work, while many have deteriorated from luxury and ease.

We believe, therefore, that the prognosis of the situation is highly favourable. An increasing virility is apparent, which on the one hand will keep within bounds the Socialist sentiments of subsidising inefficiency, and on the other hand will allay the terrors which our patriots display towards foreign nations. Doubtless there are great dangers on all sides of us; political and social change is in rapid progress. But if change itself is not necessarily a sign of progress, it is at any rate true that absence of change is a sign of decadence. In the social organism, as in the individual organism, a cessation of change implies a failure to respond to environmental changes, and heralds the first stage of dissolution. While we are not inclined to underestimate the magnitude of the perils which threaten us, yet we conceive them to be no greater than the British people have often passed through before, and we are confident that the virility which still survives will carry the British people triumphantly through them again. If the problems of the near future, those adumbrated by the declining birth-rate and the reduction of infantile mortality, are greater than mankind have ever yet been called upon to face, we still believe that there has never been an age, there has never been a country, in which the prospects of a successful solution have been greater, than the age and the country in which we live.

Art. II.—LORENZO DE' MEDICI.

1. *Lorenzo the Magnificent and Florence in her Golden Age.* By E. L. S. Horsburgh, B.A. London: Methuen. 1908.
2. *The Medici.* By Colonel G. F. Young, C.B. London: John Murray. 1909.
3. *Lorenzo de' Medici and Florence in the Fifteenth Century.* By E. Armstrong. New York and London: Putnam Sons. 1900.
4. *Lorenzo de' Medici the Magnificent.* By Alfred von Reumont (translated from the German by Robert Harrison). London: Smith and Elder. 1876.
5. *Life of Lorenzo de' Medici.* By William Roscoe. London: Bohn. 1864.
6. *History of the Papacy.* (Vol. IV.) By Mandell Creighton. London: Longmans, Green. 1903.
7. *Life and Times of Girolamo Savonarola.* By Prof. Pasquale Villari (translated by Linda Villari). London: Fisher Unwin. 1888.

There are, generally speaking, two kinds of great men—those who are the expression of their age and those who are in opposition to it, whether in advance of or behind their generation. The first, the acclaimed gods of their own day, dominating the present, leave little trace upon history—upon statesmanship and the course of affairs—but they often have a powerful influence in the world of art and letters, and act strongly upon social life. The last are generally misunderstood by their contemporaries, but they shape the future generations, they are the innovators who set Time's clock going, or the reactionaries who put the hands back. If we try to enumerate the first, the representatives of their age, so many names crowd upon the mind that we can only choose a few among them—St. Louis of France, Louis XIV., Queen Elizabeth, Sir Thomas More, Erasmus; and if we think of the protesters we shall be at no greater loss for instances, though kings are but seldom among them. We shall think of Abélard and Frederick II., of Wycliffe and St. Francis, of Luther and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. There are those, too, who have pulled history back, such as our Charles I., and the Bourbons after the Revolution, but they are not profitable to think of, and their work has to be destroyed by their successors.

Among the first kind there shines forth the great Florentine, Lorenzo de' Medici, who was the epitome of his time, perhaps more than any other man, except *le Roi Soleil.* Among the last stands out, dark, persistent, the form of Savonarola, the

reformer, who, although he left but scant mark upon his own nation, yet belonged to the permanent forces of life, and in them worked on in the world.

There seem to be different seasons for the flowering of these forces in history. In the fifteenth century knowledge flowered, and its blossom was called the Renaissance; the Renaissance flowered in its turn, and its blossom was the soul of Lorenzo the Magnificent. The blossom was not an exotic. Lorenzo was born in due season. He was no contrast to his age, like the strange Emperor, Frederick II., the intellectual adventurer and Oriental dreamer, who evoked a premature and evanescent Renaissance in his thirteenth-century court. The Florentine was neither a pioneer nor an exception to his surroundings. And it was just because, not in spite, of this fact that he was so hyperbolically adored by his subjects and his friends. A man thus typical of his day is sympathetic rather than creative. He is with his contemporaries, not beyond them; he understands them; he is more themselves than they are. And success lies with him who has the virtues and failings of the majority, and yet stands inspiringly above it. A ruler of men must excite them, must be in some way over their heads. When he does not fascinate them because he is beyond their ken, he must do so in another fashion. Lorenzo achieved this by possessing the qualities of those around him to a much more intense degree—qualities that they knew, yet wondered at, that made him accessible though unfamiliar. And there was another secret of his power over them. He was representative of the weakness of Florence as well as of its strength, and, knowing its faults in himself, could govern it with greater force and discernment than was possible for any other sovereign.

Even Lorenzo's gifts and their result, his lasting contribution to art, show him still as the type of his city and his generation. He was essentially a poet, but it is as a Tuscan poet of the fifteenth century that he lives—a reviver of the Tuscan language —a man so full of many-sided vitality that he passed beyond the formal scholarship of the Humanists and symbolised the rich and variegated life which is the import of the Renaissance. The very qualities which distinguished him from most of his stilted fellow-writers, his love of Nature and of naturalness, were original rather than creative. He saw no vision, he initiated no new movement, but he took the gifts and powers that he found ready and adventured them on fresh paths till they wore a changed aspect; he put old wine into new bottles, and the vintage was good.

Art, the undefinable, may perhaps be partially defined as the

expression of life; an impression also, coloured by the mind that interprets—and the richer the life, the better the art. But the word 'life' must mean real and varied experience, not mere movement. To-day, for instance, we are too apt to reduce life to movement, and the art of such a period is bound to grow more narrow and external, more dependent upon science than upon ideas. This was not so in the fifteenth century. Life was never fresher or fuller than in Florence, and art was never greater—no hierarchy complete in itself, but part of the business of existence, ranking as a craft little higher than other crafts. But that did not matter in a day when if art figured as a trade, trade had also been turned into an art, and artists were men before they were artists—often soldiers, always citizens, as well as painters and sculptors. And Lorenzo, the leading spirit in this vital, pulsing city, was above all else an artist, an interpreter of existence. In this he was not singular. There were many other artist princes of that day, Sforzas, Estes, Gonzagas, Malatestas; but no one else was an artist ruling over artists, freely chosen by them to be their ruler; and this could hardly have been but for the fact—a moral fact, for once in history—that the regal position of the Medici was theirs by no murderous usurpation or tyrannical tradition, such as prevailed in the rest of Italy, but simply by their fitness for the post, proclaimed by the will of the people. They had not even an official position or a Civil list; but, from the time that they ousted the Albizzis to the accession of Lorenzo's son, Piero, their power was the fruit of popularity. If the financial drawbacks of such a tenure were considerable, its moral advantages were greater, and Lorenzo enjoyed them more than any other member of his house, for they lent a reassuring stability to the strong artistic sympathies which already bound him to those he governed.

This, then, was his distinction, and this made the strength, it may be also the weakness, of himself and his city. Had there been a stronger spiritual element in Florence, had she still been the town of Giotto, Savonarola would have struck deeper root there, and his power would have survived him. His conversion of the Florentines was sensational, emotional, the conversion of impressionable artists; it involved no inner growth, leading up to a final expansion. Deep mystical qualities and desires there were both in Lorenzo and his subjects, but they were instinctive, imaginative, apt to reject austerity and discipline. The Savonarolian movement was destined to die in a soil that had no need of it.

However that may be, it is just this harmony of temperament between his realm and him which lends unity to Lorenzo and his

reign, to the multifarious, many-coloured threads which would otherwise be too dazzling. And his historians have usually been so anxious to dwell on this many-sidedness that they have done so at the expense of the unity, too often leaving us a bewildering mass of colour in the place of a portrait.

Mr. Horsburgh, his latest biographer, has not been quite guiltless on this score. As we turn over his well-written pages, we do not get a whole impression; we cannot see Lorenzo for his gifts. Yet each chapter is admirably accomplished, and no one could more lucidly recount the wars and conspiracies which complicated his government. There is perhaps hardly room for a new life of Lorenzo. Mr. Armstrong's brilliant book on the same subject in the 'Heroes of the Nations' series—a masterpiece of swift and vivid portraiture—tells practically all that is essential in Mr. Horsburgh's thicker volume. And although the limits of space imposed prevent Mr. Armstrong from giving the ample background which lends repose and bigness to a picture, his fine work will remain as the popular biography of Il Magnifico. Nor are we without more leisurely representations of him. Till a short while ago, William Roscoe's 'Lorenzo de' Medici' remained the standard authority. New documents have produced new facts, though practically no new lights, and Roscoe has been shelved for more recent authors. But after the scientific research, the over-attention to detail, and the rather fussy picturesqueness which are apt to weaken perspective and blur proportions, we confess that we hail with a sense of ease the Georgian leisure, the formal dignity and contained enthusiasm of the earlier writer: the writer of a day when Florence was still only visited in the Grand Style, when the word Renaissance was a word confined to scholars, when painting was still 'the Art,' and cheap reproductions of Botticelli's portraits were not. If Roscoe has not given us a picture, he has left us a bust—an eighteenth-century bust, suited to some spacious pilastered hall—calmly and classically alive. He was an historian of the advance guard; no mere sentimental idealiser, but a scholar who made sincere and careful use of all the resources then available. Nor must it be forgotten that he was the first man to revive, to re-discover, Lorenzo's poetry, to put him in his right niche as a poet, and to translate much of his verse with a great deal of truth and beauty. Meanwhile, should we want more of an expert and later documentary evidence, we can confidently turn to von Reumont, whose encyclopædic pages make a mine well worth delving in, though one where we need take care not to get lost in the labyrinthine passages by the way. For him, again, who wants the travellers' learning (and no visitor to Florence need despise

paste and scissors), there are the two thick volumes 'The 'Medici,' just published by Colonel Young, an excellent succinct compendium of the history of that family, ably and readily produced. Or last, if there be any who grow tired of these historians' impartiality, they may turn for contrast to Villari, who dislikes Lorenzo nearly as much as he loves Savonarola; and makes a cruel tyrant—almost a monster—of a ruler who was, at least, more merciful and not less moral than his contemporaries. Villari's prejudice has overshot the mark, and his charges are such as an unbiased mind can easily refute, or show to be gross exaggerations. This Lorenzo's biographers have done, without difference of opinion.

It is striking enough that from them all the verdict upon him is unanimous, almost monotonous. And this is in great measure because, in his sympathetic nature, no one gift or quality seems more prominent than another—unless it be his faculty for poetry, which was, after all, a part of his whole being. Unlike innovators or tyrants or evil-doers, his influence upon the course of events raises few problems, provides no themes provoking partisanship. Events, indeed, in his case are of secondary importance to his personality, and here, too, the written portraits of him have suffered. His figure, which should dominate, is sometimes lost by his conscientious chroniclers in a confusing tangle of affairs. But the writer of an article need feel no such historical responsibility, and may be allowed to concentrate his vision upon the man himself, eliminating events, excepting such as bear directly upon his character.

Those who have once crossed the courtyard of the old Medici (now the Riccardi) Palace, and have stepped inside its walls, have felt the spell of the great family and of its greatest representative. Without, the walls are powerful and beautiful—soberly sumptuous, of fine proportions. Within, amidst shadowy unknown spaces, they are glowing with poetry and colour—with the frescoes of Benozzo Gozzoli. And here we may behold the young Lorenzo riding like a fairy prince, the third of the Magi. But, even in his teens, Lorenzo could never have looked thus. When we see the massive head and protruding jaw on Bertoldo's medal, taken when he was twenty-nine, we know how much Gozzoli idealised. Yet sinister-featured and underhung as he was, with the face of an heretical theologian, harsh of voice, weak-eyed, there must always have been a glamour, a fire, a radiance about him, for he had the power of drawing all men to him. His countenance at once fills him who sees it with subtle questionings; he is made to baffle and bewilder. The brow and the mouth are at variance: the brow is full of thought and aspiration, it

might be the brow of a reformer; the mouth belongs to the senses, to the will to enjoy. It is not difficult to recognise the Pagan reveller who loved to join the wild torchlit processions on Carnival nights in Florence, to be swept on by the dancing crowd, amidst myrtle-wreathed youths and maidens singing the Bacchanalian songs that he wrote for them, songs that are best left untranslated. This is one Lorenzo. But the next time we see him, we may find him remote in his splendour—amidst Botticelli's pictures and Verocchio's marbles. 'O Galilean, 'after all thou hast conquered!'—the famous words that he has put into the mouth of Julian the Apostate in his play, are the outcry of his own spirit. They came from a Lorenzo at least as real as the sybarite, as sincere as the art patron who the next hour will be discussing classical sculpture in his garden with the boy, Michael Angelo. Yet these three Lorenzos are the same man, and are made one by his artist's temperament. And this can alone help us to apprehend the paradoxical being, sensuous and spiritual, frugal and splendid, simple of life and subtle of mind, who was the familiar spirit of his city.

There was no danger of forgetting the man in his clothes. Even in that magnificent period, he never cared to dress grandly except for State occasions. In summer he wore a violet cloak, in winter his red magisterial robe; but at public festivals, or when he wanted to impress foreign envoys, none revelled in magnificence as he did. Well did this uncrowned king know the worth of pageantry, not only as a means to charm his people and keep his sovereignty, but also to maintain his equality in the eyes of more accredited potentates.

We have a single glimpse of his boyhood—when Duke John of Anjou, King René's son, was in Florence, and Lorenzo put on a French costume in his honour. 'The Duke received him,' wrote his tutor, 'as if he were some little Frenchman newly 'arrived from France, but his gravity belied his costume.' His youth was glorious—the youth of a lord of the Renaissance. We have glimpses of him giving presents, going on embassies, making superb retorts. He travels to Milan for the christening of Duke Galeazzo's son, and presents the Duchess with a great diamond in a collar, 'whence it followed that the aforesaid Lord 'desired that I should stand godfather to all his other children.' He meets the bride, Hippolita Sforza, his lifelong friend, on her way to her princely bridegroom at Naples; he is reproached for bestowing too rich a gift in return for a horse sent him from Sicily. 'Do you not know that it is a royal gift,' he said, 'and 'does it not seem royal not to be conquered in liberality?' It is the answer of a prince out of Shakespeare.

He was but doing justice to his family tradition. The reputation of his father has suffered unduly from his nickname. Piero Il Gottoso, a martyr to gout from boyhood upwards, might as well have been called Il Generoso or Il Coraggioso. Enduring, uncomplaining, sweet-natured, he never allowed his sufferings to affect his character, but built up a stronghold against them by learning, and by planning his son's education. He was one of the few rulers who have understood how to pardon; perhaps the only one who put down a plot against his life without any bloodshed, who even let the greatest delinquents, all of them familiar friends, go free. One only, Luca Pitti, paid him with gratitude. It was the seventeen-year-old Lorenzo who discovered the conspiracy and saved his father's life, his first important public action. He appeared more and more upon the stage. Piero was a considerable statesman, respected by other nations—it was to him that Louis XI. gave permission to add the French lily to the Medici arms—but his health obliged him to retire early from affairs and make room for his son. Statecraft was not, however, the most valuable legacy his father left him. It was from Piero that he inherited a good deal of his scholarly enthusiasm, and, what was perhaps more important, the invaluable gift of endurance.

But the most potent influence in his life was his love for his mother, with whose nature his own had great affinity. Lucrezia Tornabuoni must have been a delightful woman. She was loving, she was gay, she had wits and a marked turn for poetry. The mystic strain in her was strong—the strain she bequeathed to her son—and her verse took the form of 'spiritual songs,' sung in the streets of Florence by the people, so that, in a peculiar sense, her soul might be said to live on in her city. Nevertheless she was no puritan. She kept open house and open heart for the poets—her son's friends, and her husband's—indulgently kind even to the coarse-tongued Pulci, whose sayings might easily have offended a lady less fastidious than she was. A quarrelsome set of people they were, and they looked to her to soothe their ruffled feathers. As for her favourite among the rising generation, the young painter, Sandro Botticelli, she took him to live in the palace and treated him almost as a son, an affection that he repaid in kind. His spiritual imagination pleased her; and he, impressionable, unknown, may well have been influenced by this first friendship with so great a lady. The picture he painted for her, the Madonna of the Magnificat in the Uffizi, is full of personal feeling. There is a loving touch in the portraiture of the two boy-angels who

hold the book—the idealised pictures, it is said, of the young Lorenzo and Giuliano.

And she turned her son's attention towards subjects that would otherwise hardly have occupied him. From boyhood onwards she taught him to do kind offices, to regard the humble, to dower poor girls, to give a personal note to his charities—a welcome break in the dull annals of mechanically lavish generosity that deaden the Renaissance. In all ways Lucrezia did more to form Lorenzo's outlook than she knew. 'My only 'refuge . . . the only helper who could aid and counsel me,' he said in his sorrow after her death. He had plenty of teachers, too, to mould him, the best scholars and men of letters then alive. There was Christoforo Landino, the famous lecturer and writer upon Dante, professor of poetry and eloquence at Florence. There was Argyropulos, the great Greek, who with Lascaris maintained the enthusiasm for Greek learning which had long possessed Florence and which had lately received fresh stimulus from the illustrious scholars who had come with John Paleologus and the Patriarch of Constantinople, when they attended the Council in the city, eleven years before Lorenzo was born. And last, but foremost, there was Marsilio Ficino, the great, the first translator and the fervent votary of Plato, who kept a lamp burning before his bust; the pious parish priest steeped in classical knowledge; the dreamer of dreams, who was sure that he could reconcile Christ and Plato; the consoler called in by all his friends to cheer them; the musician who was wont to play the lute to soothe his own melancholy, on the days, perhaps, when big scholars quarrelled like small men, and Unity seemed far away. He had been loved by three generations of Medici. Cosimo it was who had charged him to translate Plato into Latin, who had given him a country farm at Montevecchio in which to accomplish the work. And the last thing his patron asked to hear when he lay dying was the new translation, as Marsilio sat at his bedside, now reading, now talking of 'the Only Good,' the same beyond life as it is here. Piero carried on Cosimo's affection for Marsilio and chose him to teach Lorenzo, and to Lorenzo he played Mentor all his life. His final value for his pupil lay in his Platonism. He found an apt disciple—the flame was already alight. Lorenzo imbibed Platonism, Renaissance Platonism, with the air he breathed. It was the new gospel of Italy, men felt that a revelation had come. And it is impossible to understand Lorenzo at all unless we realise the essential part it played in his life.

In what did this attractive creed consist? There was, Mr. Armstrong points out, 'very little Plato in the current

'Platonism.' It was based not upon Plato, but upon the fanciful Neo-Platonists of Alexandria. Ficino, the head of the Florentine group, translated such Alexandrian works as the 'Hermeticus' and the writings of Plotinus. He believed, indeed, that Plato hardly counted 'until tested and sifted in the 'laboratory' of authors like these. 'Ficino's object,' the same authority tells us, 'was to explain to his fellow-citizens the 'relation between the unity and plurality of Nature, between 'the absolute and the finite, between rest and motion, between 'God and man and lower nature, between soul, intellect, and 'matter.' Sophistries and puerilities there were, but truth and poetry also. The reality of the Idea, the need to pursue it through all its earthly disguises, the vision of unity and beauty—'a broken reflection . . . of the perfect simple beauty 'which is God'—the scorn of the natural and the physical, such were some of the conceptions which permeated and inspired Lorenzo, whether in thought or daily conduct. It was a faith that warred against what was primitive—that made his intellect emotional and his passions cold.

The new religion was happy in having a great genius to embody it and lend it permanence. Botticelli was the highest expression of this intellectual fantasy. It was not only that he illustrated passages in Poliziano, perhaps in other Platonists. It was more than this. What Homer did for heroic deeds, Botticelli did for Platonic visions. Love he turned into an enchanting and passionless ideal, an elaborate ethereal form of poetry—and poetry his painting remains.

The Platonic faith had a more concrete outcome than art. This was the far-famed Academe, conceived by the Greek Gemisthus Plethon, who persuaded the willing Cosimo to found it. Its high-priest was Marsilio, ordained by his patron—for the Academe was a church for high discourse. Here you might see Lorenzo taking the head of the board—laid in a grassy palace garden—at the yearly dinner, the Symposium held on Plato's birthday. His bust presided at table and each guest took the part of a character in his 'Dialogues,' sustaining it all through the banquet. Marsilio would be present and Poliziano; and so would Giuliano Il Superbo, and, in after years, Pico della Mirandola.

Their grave and fantastic debates made a great stir in the world outside. With all the eagerness of undergraduates they possessed the maturity of men. Talk was their medium, and they never tired of it. Sometimes they held discussions at Lorenzo's Society of the Violet, and sometimes they conversed less formally in the chestnut glades of the Camaldolese Convent

of the Angeli, on the hills of the Casentino. We know the sort of things they spoke about, from his tutor Landino's 'Disputationes Camalduenses.' There was one especial day—it was in summer—when they gathered together by a 'bubbling spring.' Giuliano and his brother were there with their rainbow-coloured following, so was the great Leon Battista Alberti—past-master in perspective, painter, architect, mathematician, scientific writer, and author of the current 'Guide to Parents'—a man of much power with Lorenzo. To them came Marsilio Ficino, as usual with his lute, and the company gave themselves up to talk. The subject they chose was the relative merits of an active or a contemplative life. Alberti urged contemplation as the best chance an active ruler can have of helping his fellow-men. Lorenzo opposed him with warmth. The conversation glided into other themes—Virgil and the Platonic aspects of the 'Aeneid.' They never kept long off Plato.

Great though his teachers were, Lorenzo's greatest teacher was Florence. We are apt to think of his time as the beginning of new and wonderful things. Yet he must have regarded himself as enjoying a great culture of the past. The Renaissance of art and poetry had begun in the thirteenth century with Giotto and Dante. Boccaccio and Petrarch maintained the dynasty in literature; and in painting and sculpture a troop of minor names prepared the way for greater ones. By the time of Lorenzo's accession, the first generation of big artists had passed away. Masolo, Masaccio, Uccello, Fra Angelico, Fra Lippo Lippi, Donatello, Brunelleschi, Ghiberti, Luca della Robbia, Desiderio, Mino da Fiesole, were all either dead or soon to die. Benozzo Gozzoli and Ghirlandaio were the reigning painters; Leonardo, Botticelli, Filippino Lippi, the rising stars; while Verrocchio, Maiano, and, later, Michael Angelo, were the sculptors who prevailed. Meanwhile the ardour for classical learning, which too many still restrict to the fifteenth century, had already reached a kind of maturity nearly a hundred years before, with Boccaccio's revival of Homer and Petrarch's wide knowledge of the classics. Since their day, the pursuit of Greek among the Florentines had increased, and when the great company of Greek savants arrived in Florence for the Papal Council of 1439, they asserted that they found more Greek there than they knew themselves. Some of these, and later others—the fugitives of 1453 from Constantinople—settled in the city of the Medici; and Gemisthus Plethon, and the Nicaean bishop Bessarion, taught there, making disciples among Lorenzo's predecessors. Men actually fell in love with classical learning and were capable of any discipline for its sake. The soil was ready for Plato, the way prepared for Virgil,

although his complete works did not appear till as late as 1471. The scholarship of the fifteenth century was indeed a religion, and the more usual forms of religion could hardly go far among a people who refused to read the Bible for fear that the inelegance of the Latin should spoil their style. Nor could their knowledge have become so strong unless it had been of long growth. What the Medicis achieved, or rather the Humanists under their protection, was to make learning popular and not the mere monopoly of schoolmen. The Humanists, the spoilt children of their time, were the channels through which the river of knowledge was carried far and wide to enrich the common land. The knowledge that they coveted was universal. Law, science, medicine, mathematics, each man thought he could master them all ; each classroom had its galaxy of names, its crowd of sober, eager students.

Thus, when Lorenzo set out on life, he found a tradition already old. His reign saw art and learning at their zenith, at the point after which they were bound to decline. For all fulness contains in it, invisibly, the germs of decay, nor was it otherwise for him. Unconsciously he stood between two worlds—the past which erelong was to end, and a modern world of which that past contained the hidden seed. It has seemed necessary to dwell upon this fact, because it did much to make him and his times what they were. Any man who stands thus between two periods—on the top of the downward hill—is always an interesting study : an individual of pronounced tastes, intensely sympathetic ; as we should say, a Modern. Lorenzo is one of the first people who possesses in his sayings, letters, poems, that personal note, that sense of intimacy which distinguishes our art, our correspondence, our manners, from those of the fifteenth century.

And if he bears in him, as it were, the presentiment of a decadence to come, so does the art which expressed his time. The beginnings of such a decadence are enchanting. They may run counter to a great classical tradition, but they, too, are of personal appeal. It is part of the spell of Leonardo, of Botticelli, of Piero di Cosimo, that they are not simple. They are, on the contrary, always subtle and secret and elaborate—intellectual, not primitive. Their types are non-natural, as are also those of their great contemporaries in Padua and Umbria, Andrea Mantegna and Piero della Francesca. They paint such people as the average man would call ' queer ' ; forms that are abnormal ; the baffling eyes and lips of those who have grown old enough to press life for an answer to its riddle—who will never be old enough to find it.

But Lorenzo knew nothing of all this. He was too busy living,

to probe questions. 'To the Florentine mind nothing is arduous,' ran an old proverb, and his brilliant ease made him turn swiftly from one occupation to another. If at this moment he is sitting in the Duomo, crowded with people all listening intently to Coello, the Dante lecturer then in fashion, at the next he is flashing in a tournament. No account of his youth would be complete without a mention of his glorious joust in 1469—only rivalled six years later by the one which Giuliano gave for Simonetta. Lorenzo's *Giostro* was supposed to be in honour of his bride, not yet arrived from Rome, but, in true Platonic fashion, it was really in honour of his lady-love, Lucrezia Donati, the queen of the entertainment, whose name was upon all men's lips. One wearies of the splendours of the pageant, of the stuffs, of the jewels; yet there is poetry in Giuliano's helmet wrought by Verrocchio, and in the dress in which Lorenzo rode into the Piazza. A diamond shone in the centre of his shield, and he had a scarf round his shoulders all embroidered with pearls and roses, some of them blooming, some faded. And his standard bore the words *Le temps revient.* Was it only the spring that was to come again, or was this his message to Lucrezia. that his marriage would make no difference to his love?

Wherever he was, he enjoyed the moment. 'We rode along 'singing,' wrote the poet Poliziano, as they journeyed one Lent from Florence to Pisa—'singing, and sometimes talking theology 'so as not to forget the season of fasting. Lorenzo was triumph. At San Miniato we tried to read some of St. Augustine, 'but the reading was soon exchanged for music and for polishing 'up the figure of a dancer which we found there.' Such was the Lent of the Renaissance.

We can tell a man by his friends as surely as we can *not* tell him by his loves. In friendship Lorenzo certainly comes off well. He and his friends, equally one another's friends also, formed an extraordinarily generous little circle. They loved and admired one another for the best that was in them, and each incited each to high exploits of mind and of deed. Marsilio Ficino, Poliziano, and Pico della Mirandola were his closest companions. Marsilio, the Christian Humanist, we know. Poliziano, the poet of amazing reputation, considered greater in his own day than any other—the first great critical editor of manuscripts—the irritable man of letters who grew depressed in country life far away from Florence, and always nursed a grievance, and quarrelled with Lorenzo's wife over the education of Lorenzo's children—was none the less essentially noble. He was capable of losing himself in something bigger than himself, in sacrificing ease for the sake of knowledge. 'Nature and

'youth,' he once said, 'drew me to Homer'; and to the translation of the 'Iliad' (the second book) into Latin he devoted the best of his young powers. If he suffered from imaginary slights and jealousies, he was also full of generous friendship.

'If the summer heat oppress thee at Careggi,' he wrote to Marsilio, 'the cooler air of Fiesole will be pleasant to thee. The glare of the sun troubles us little. The neighbourhood is thickly peopled, yet I find here the quiet which suits me. But I will tempt thee with still one more attraction. Pico sometimes wanders beyond the boundaries of his own grounds, breaks in unexpectedly upon my solitude and carries me off from my shady gardens to his evening meal. You know how he has things—nothing too much, but everything as it should be, and spiced with his conversation. But thou must be *my* guest. Thou shalt find I have as good a table and perhaps better wine. Pico and I are rivals in wines.'

Pico della Mirandola was the idol of the group and the youngest. Irresistible in grace, blest by birth and fortune, rich in every gift of mind and form, his golden hair falling round his sensitive face, he must have looked like that young man in the Louvre whom Raphael painted with such deep tranquillity in his eyes. 'Something divine seemed to shine in his face,' wrote Poliziano. The gods loved him and he died young, but not before he had done enough for a long lifetime. He had all the accomplishments of the Renaissance phœnix. At twenty-one, he already knew twenty-two languages. He was not only a fervent Platonist of the Ficino school, but a brilliant Orientalist versed in Hebrew, Arabic, Chaldee. The East—'my own East,' he called it—exercised a potent spell over him. And he was steeped most of all in the Cabala—in which, after true Platonic fashion, he sought for unity with Christianity and found 'the basis 'of all religion.' Phœnixes are not humble birds. At the same early age of twenty-one, Pico proposed to discuss nine hundred propositions before the Pope—many among them Cabalistic. The Pope, perhaps so as not to hear them, condemned them. Lorenzo mediated; Innocent VIII. remained firm; and it was not till Alexander Borgia wore the mitre, a year after Lorenzo's death, that Rome consented to forgive his friend. It was in 1480 that Pico arrived in Florence. He came to the mental climate that suited him. We can see him and Marsilio there, as they held long evening discussions with bearded Jewish pundits on the inspiration of the Prophets. There, too, it was that he learned to know Reuchlin, then a visitor to Italy, and acquired a strong influence on his mind. For Reuchlin ended by making of the Talmud, in relation to Christianity, what Pico

and Marsilio had made of Plato. Pico had power wherever he was, because he went to the end of his ideas. And, on the whole, he lived up to his tenets. He had, it must be owned, a short lapse from Platonic Unity when, riding one May day near Arezzo on his way to Florence, he caught up a lady, the wife of a poor Medici, by the roadside and carried her off pillion-fashion on his horse, the city bells booming and the police behind him. He dropped the lady, and was actually arrested, but Lorenzo interfered and set him free. His friends said that the lady, out for a stroll and suddenly smitten by his beauty, had unexpectedly 'leapt upon his horse,' but people found that hard to believe. The great world and the small world discussed the affair, and the Ferrarese Ambassador declared that it made Pico lose position in Florence. Other men might do such things, he said, but Pico 'was regarded as a saint.' He probably soon won his pardon from the public—he was young. He was also devoutly sincere. With him, too, in the end, 'the Galilean conquered.' Both he and Ficino went over to Savonarola, Pico with all the warmth of his nature. He burned his love-poems; he decided to become a friar and to walk barefoot through the world. But death had decided otherwise. It is a strange pendant to the story of Arezzo that a lady, a devoted follower of Savonarola, fell in love with Pico della Mirandola—with the kind of ideal love that he desired. She had presentiments; she foretold that he would die 'at the blooming of the lilies.' And on the very day that Charles VIII. entered Florence with the lilies of France, Pico died with Savonarola at his bedside.

It is impossible not to dwell upon him, for he was, as it were, part of Lorenzo, yet the only person who almost eclipsed him. There was something intangible about him, something beautiful and remote, that made him into living poetry. Perhaps Shelley alone could have described him, for all that Pico was, or wished to be, would have appealed to him. And yet, in spite of Pico's elusiveness, there was no one who had such power over contemporary thought.

The influence of Plato upon Lorenzo was better in friendship than in love. Love is a natural business, and Neo-Platonism is not. It despises the natural as the enemy of the soul. And these notions took deeper root, because they found old soil to grow in. The professors of chivalry had long ago preached the worthlessness of all love excepting that which is born of the soul's choice; it treated a husband as a necessary if negligible fact, and a spiritual squire as indispensable. It was easy enough to join the new Platonism on to such conceptions. And then the Platonic contempt for instinct found affinities with monastic

ideas. What is fastidiousness after all but a kind of asceticism of the intellect? Men can be as austere from taste as from religious motives. Lorenzo's loves are the most charming and artificial of sentiments. We will use his own words, translated by Mr. Horsburgh from his *Commentario*, a kind of Platonic record of his experiences.

'There died in Florence a lady for whom all the city grieved; for truly she was adorned with beauty and every natural grace. . . . All who were brought into association with her believed themselves to be loved by her; yet none was jealous of her, nor was one jealous of another. Her beauty in death seemed more radiant than ever before. Everyone desired to celebrate her in verse. I, among the number, wrote four sonnets.'

The lady was Simonetta Cattaneo, the love of his brother Giuliano—the Venus of Botticelli's pictures, the lady of the floating veil at Chantilly. Lorenzo did not know his best poetry. The night after her death he was walking in his garden and saw a star he had never seen before. 'Her soul,' he said, 'has 'passed into the new star.' There was more feeling in that than in all his verse. His love-poems, indeed, read more like songs to an imaginary love than to a real one—in the manner of Daniel's 'Idea,' or Sidney's more elaborate conceits. Later, he wrote his *Selve d'amore* in remembrance of her. He longs, he says, for some new flame, some fresh embodiment of his ideal. And he found it before he had turned eighteen. While still sad because of Simonetta, he went against his will to a wedding tournament, and there he met a lady who gave him a wreath of violets; her name was Lucrezia Donati.

'Her beauty was wonderful,' he says . . . 'her appearance grave, but not proud. . . . There was dignity in everything she did. . . . Her hands were beautiful beyond any that Nature yet had fashioned . . . her wit fine and polished, but without offence. She had no trace of that defect which is so common in women, and which makes them insupportable—the affectation of understanding everything. The dead lady had shone like a star, but this one was the rising sun.'

He promised the rising sun a tournament in her honour, but there was a kind of merchant-prince's economy in the way in which he kept his word. The feast was to the glory of his love, but it was given to celebrate his marriage with another. And his feeling for Lucrezia—a garbled emotion, half of the mind, half of the instincts—lasted long after that event. In this he was but obeying the standards of his time, and doing what even his wife expected. His great immorality is another matter and

one with which we need not deal here. Yet, for all this, Lorenzo's marriage was a happy one.

His mother chose his wife for him in Rome. Her choice was Clarice Orsini, of much higher birth than Lorenzo and probably a little aware of it. She was of the type of the good aristocrat —pious and rather narrow in her piety, with a sweet and dignified temper, and with more good sense than intellect. Mr. Horsburgh brings out very pleasantly how much a part of Lorenzo she became, in spite of their differing views. They were household friends, if not companions, and they trusted each other. Lorenzo's letter to the Pope when she died is no Renaissance collection of mortuary tropes, but instinct with a deep and genuine grief. And perhaps the best evidence of their happiness was in that of their children. Lorenzo was charming as a father. Machiavelli indeed censures him tartly for his familiarity in romping with his family. And his eldest boy's little letters tell us more than pages of description. In one, Piero entreats his father ' to be careful of the plague and not to forget his children, because ' they were tiny things and could not do without him '; in another, he begs for sweetmeats, or describes his brothers and sisters, ' Giuliano does nothing but laugh ; Lucrezia sews, sings, and ' reads ; Maddalena goes knocking her head against the walls, ' but does not hurt herself ; Luigia can already say several little ' sentences ; Contessina is making a great noise all over the house.' When it seemed worth while, he wrote in Latin. ' I have always ' written in Latin to give more tone to my letters, but I have ' not yet got that pony which you promised.' He got it, as he got most things that he wanted. He was one of those fascinating children who grow up into spoilt and troublesome men. Lorenzo called him ' his madcap,' the second boy, Giovanni, ' his wiseacre,' and the third, Giuliano, ' his good boy.' The ' wiseacre ' became Leo X., and Michael Angelo immortalised the ' good boy ' in the marble of Il Penseroso. Poliziano's letters, even the peevish ones, give a living picture of their education. In a time of political disturbance, Lorenzo had sent them with him and Clarice to a distance, to be out of the way. At first they are at Pistoia— all goes well. Piero is ' pretty diligent,' Giovanni rides out on horseback and the people follow him in crowds. But later they move into the country, where they spent the winter. Poliziano is dismal indeed, away from libraries and scholars. He has nothing left him but to make scenes with Clarice. They quarrel over Giovanni's education. ' As for Giovanni,' he says (Giovanni was three years old), ' his mother employs him in reading the ' psalter, which I by no means commend. As long as she kept ' from interfering with him, it is amazing how quickly he got on—

'so much as to read without help.' The dispute grew worse with the weather. Lorenzo's mother is Poliziano's confidante.

'The only news I have to send you,' he writes, 'is that we have such incessant rain that it is impossible to get out. Country exercise has to be exchanged for childish games indoors Here I stand by the fire in my great-coat and slippers, and you might take me for the very figure of melancholy. . . . I neither see, nor hear, nor do anything that gives me pleasure. . . . The plague and the war are incessantly in my mind. I lament past misfortunes and anticipate future evils; and I have no longer at my side my dear Madonna Lucrezia, to whom I might unbosom my troubles.'

At last his ill-temper reached a crisis, and Clarice compelled him to depart. She justifies herself to her husband. She will be glad, she says, 'not to be put into one of Poliziano's tales, as 'Luigi Pulci was.' Poliziano also wrote and signed his letter 'Yours though the world itself turn upside down.' But it never did—for Poliziano. Lorenzo settled the matter characteristically. He respected his wife's decision, and soothed his friend by inviting him to live in his own villa at Fiesole.

His girls, like his boys, were his companions, especially his favourite, Lucrezia. His mystery play, *SS. Giovanni e Paolo*, was written for them to act; they were always in his mind. At his table they heard the best talk, a table where young Michael Angelo dined daily, in company with every man of distinction who visited Florence. His aim was not to make them this or that, but to produce human beings who were well grown on all sides—who could work, play, discern, with the same vigour. A judgment of young Piero's upon a visitor perhaps best shows how far Lorenzo's views succeeded. 'He 'is said to be an adroit man of business,' runs the letter, 'but 'I doubt it, for he seems to me rather ceremonious.' It was not in vain that Piero's father had waged war against pedantry and taught his sons to go to the point.

But their education had its drawbacks, the faults of the time. Lorenzo was mundane and ambitious, as unscrupulous as other princes were. He never rested till he got a cardinal's hat for his son Giovanni, who was only fourteen, the youngest cardinal ever created. And his letter of counsel to the boy when he went on this occasion to Rome, so much praised by his biographers, might well have been written by Polonius. He bids him rise early and use tact and fear God and honour the Pope, and then he will probably get something more out of the Vatican. An epistle to Piero, about to start on a diplomatic errand, is in the same strain. Lorenzo kept Plato out of politics.

Very pleasant was the life in his home, whether at Careggi, Fiesole, or Florence. It is almost a relief to find how many were his guests who were neither high-souled Platonists nor scholars, but simply jolly souls and boon companions. They hawked with him, and drank his wine, and told good stories, and made jests, and admired his wit. There was never the least hint of condescension about him. He would stroll into the workshop of the ironsmith, Niccolo Grosso, and allow him to be as rude to him as he liked ; he would gossip with the peasants on the hill-sides as if he were their equal ; and, what was far more difficult, he was both a prince and a good comrade to his equals. To them all, he was the life-giving centre. 'Dost 'thou really mean to leave me buried in the snow, among these 'woods, lonely and comfortless, while thou goest to Rome ?' wrote the poet Luigi Pulci to him—'Is it really my fate that 'I must never mount a horse by thy side ? How often have we 'talked of Rome . . . . Do not treat me like old iron—but I 'shall soon be well if thou carest for me.'

About all that Lorenzo did there was enjoyment. That was his distinctive note. It made him different from the rest of the princely art-patrons, the collectors of books and antiques throughout Italy. He enjoyed them first and knew about them afterwards, though no one knew more about them than he did. He had, perhaps, more beautiful possessions than any man ; but, unlike his compeers, he never acquired them from love of novelty or mere desire to outshine his neighbours. If he employed an army of scholars and artists as his buyers, and sent Lascaris to Mount Athos to search for manuscripts, it was because he really cared for what they found—and cared in a generation so fastidious that printed books were still considered vulgar. He once told Poliziano that he wished that he and Pico would buy him so many books that he would have no money left and would have to pawn his household goods to get them. And when he had them, he knew what to do with them. If Cosimo had founded the Laurentian Library and the famous library of San Marco, it was Lorenzo who made them what they were. More than this, he read the books he had. 'Leisure is what all good men wish to obtain, but great men 'alone achieve'—so he said, and he himself achieved it.

Yet he was at his happiest alone with Nature. He loved hunting and sport as he loved art, but he liked best of all to go off by himself among the hills, his hawk maybe on his wrist, to watch the birds and beasts and flowers, and mark the subtle changes of the seasons ; to talk to the shepherds and woodmen of their work, and also of their loves. It is difficult

when speaking of him to avoid the word 'modern,' and his poetry shows what we cannot but call a modern feeling for Nature. He can observe and reproduce small things and big with equal truth—the ants, the long flight of cranes against the sky, the yellow river at flood, strewn with ruin, the crackling of the winter leaves.

There was a great deal of the pagan in Lorenzo. And yet as we say it, he contradicts us. After a long day's hunt, or a banquet more Bacchic than Platonic, in the midst of his manuscripts and medals he suddenly falls silent. The mystic mood that his friends knew well has come over him. Lorenzo's mysticism is interesting because it came neither from the æsthete's fastidious disgust of life nor from a craving for novelty. It arose in a soul foiled by the senses, and for ever unsatisfied. It stood for the need of a nature striving after a dimly apprehended good.

Mr. Horsburgh thinks that this state of mind was 'more 'constant in him than any other.' We should rather say that more than any other this one underlay the rest. It was the attitude which made him seek out Savonarola even when the friar repelled him, that constrained him to return again and again to walk in the garden of San Marco, though Savonarola would not come out to him. His patience with the great Dominican was wonderful. He allowed him to preach against him in the Duomo, and did no more than send a protest through some friends. His last act was to call him to his bedside. Savonarola possessed the something after which Lorenzo was always groping, and Il Magnifico knew sincerity when he found it. This is all the more remarkable because at the time that Savonarola returned to Florence, the city and Lorenzo himself were full of Fra Mariano da Genazzano, the fashionable preacher, the suave and eloquent man of culture. 'I never 'knew a man at once so attractive and so cautious,' wrote Poliziano. 'Many preachers think themselves masters of men's 'life and death, they . . . weary men by setting up for judges 'of morals, but here is a man of moderation. Lorenzo, who 'understands men so well . . . likes to talk and walk with 'him better than any other kind of recreation.' Between such a priest and Savonarola there was no common ground; and between the friar and Lorenzo there existed the same gulf—one not to be crossed—the fixed gulf between the amateur and the reformer. Savonarola could understand a bad man and bring him to repentance, but an amateur was, in his eyes, his bitterest enemy. Width of mind was bound to offend him. If Lorenzo 'was a Catholic by conviction as well as by policy,' he

was also something larger. His 'religious poetry is a measure 'of his sense of that infinite mystery which we call life.' And also of something beyond it. 'He is dead even to this life,' said Lorenzo, 'who has no hopes of another. . . . The beginning of 'the true life is the end of the life which is not true.'

So much for Lorenzo as a private man. When we regard him as a ruler and a statesman we have to judge rather differently. There comes in more of the current standard and less of the individual man. And yet even here we find him the reconciling spirit, the Modern, the prince who preferred peace to war. Unlike his contemporaries, Lorenzo believed in diplomacy rather than in conquest, in equilibrium rather than aggression. He aimed at maintaining the prestige of his State by a delicate balance of power, only to be broken by war when self-defence or an ally demanded it. And he chose to increase the national resources through extension of commerce, not of territory, through civic wealth, not the loot of *condottieri*. This policy was, of course, far in advance of his day. Even such a subtle politician as Machiavelli urges conquest as the only possible means by which a dignified sovereign can keep up or aggrandise his position. Lorenzo had the courage to go against contemporary canons. If we glance at the campaigns of his reign, we shall find that they were urged on him by necessity. The Volterrans had risen against him before his troops besieged the town. The terrible anti-Papal war (1478–1480), the worst in his time, was forced on him by Sixtus IV., a result of the Pazzi's conspiracy against his life in which the Pope had been a tacit accomplice, the Pope's nephew, Girolamo Riario, the leading spirit. For if the Pazzi's jealousy of Lorenzo was the ostensible motive of the plot, the real motives were the Pope's desire to oust the Medici and Riario's designs upon Forli and Faenza, claims he knew Lorenzo would resist as dangerous to Florence. And when the scheme failed (for though Giuliano lay murdered near the altar Lorenzo escaped into the sacristy), and when Lorenzo executed the Archbishop of Pisa for the crime, there began between himself and Sixtus a storm of accusation and defiance on the one side, and of excommunication on the other, which resulted in the dire two years' war between Florence and the Pope allied to Naples. But if Lorenzo was helpless to prevent it, he did his best to end the misery it caused. It was he who, at great risk to his life, at last put himself in the hands of his enemy, Ferrante, King of Naples, and went there to save his people by negotiating peace. It was characteristic of him that, instead of being murdered by his adversaries, he held a splendid Court among men whom he made into his friends, and

that his triumphant return with the desired treaty should be immortalised, not by historians, but by Botticelli, in his great Minerva of the Pitti Palace. This was in 1480. The war between Ferrara and the Pope, with Venice to help him (1480–1482), again was thrust upon him by his alliance with Ferrara, and he was instrumental in bringing it to a conclusion; while in the war of the barons of Naples against their king, who was supported by the Pope, Lorenzo so contrived that he practically took no part except the diplomatic one which eventually brought about a peace. As for his smaller military enterprises, they were undertaken to secure Florentine territory from encroachment, and establish near it the dynasties that he thought fit—as in the cases of his expeditions to help Imola and Forlì, Faenza and Rimini, Città di Castello and Perugia, or the city of Siena against the nobles. Or else he fought to keep or to retake some fortified place important to his State, like the stronghold of Sarzana, that town the recapture of which from Genoa counted among the feats of his life.

In those days of ambition and emulation, of the greed of land for land's sake—the days of Sforzas, Malatestas, Bentivoglios, Riarios—this courageous policy of non-aggression showed Lorenzo to be exceptional; and we should expect to find him thus also in his standards of mercy and of justice. Cruelty has, however, been one of the charges against him. Is it a true one? We think not, and so think the three biographers we have been quoting. Villari alone makes use of every story, however wild, against him, without any regard to their consonance with the rest of his behaviour. When we estimate the humaneness of a man in the fifteenth century, we must remember what his world then thought humane. Much that we now accept as common kindness he would have looked upon as weakness; what seem to us barbarous deeds were to him merely needful police precautions. And in some measure he was right. Extreme penalties were constantly preventive of deeds more terrible and harmful. Lorenzo did not punish from revenge: tears had once been seen in his eyes when he was obliged to pronounce a severe sentence. He did not murder to gain power, like the Sforzas and Riarios; and with him cruelty was no fine art, as it was with them and the Malatestas. When we look at him by their side—and that is the only fair way to look at him—we are compelled to recognise that he is far ahead of them.

Nor need we change this view when we come to specific accusations. The sack of Volterra may be easily disposed of, for the sack took place without his orders and he never knew of

its enormities till it was over. Again, after the Pazzi plot, when in his awful grief for his brother's murder he might well have proved pitiless, what did he do? He did, it is true, allow the chief conspirators, the Pazzis, the Archbishop of Pisa, and the *condottiere* Montesecchio, to be brutally mutilated and executed; but had he left them to the raging people, it would have been worse. Moreover, he wanted to give that people itself a lesson—a purpose which prompted him to employ Botticelli to paint on the walls of the Palazzo Publico the portraits of the victims, swinging, as they had swung, from the windows. If he had not taken strong steps then, his rule would have been seriously endangered.

In every criticism of Lorenzo the insecurity of that rule must be remembered. His position was an anomaly. For all practical purposes, he was a king; in reality, he was a wealthy banker, only ruling his fellow-citizens at their pleasure and liable to the same penalties as they were. He had all the financial responsibilities of a sovereign, without any civil list, and he was obliged to keep up the forms of a republic, with the practices of a monarchy. This incongruous state of things was answerable for proceedings of his that had the semblance of rapacity. He has been charged with extortionate taxation, but his methods were less greedy than those exercised in other States, and his land-tax and his 'gradated scale,' which made the rich incur the heaviest financial burdens, were progressive and beneficial measures. His most unpopular action was the abolition of the Dowry Fund—an insurance company that promoted marriages by paying down dowries for young women. Marriage, among big Florentine families, played an important part politically, shifting the position of parties and consolidating landed property. The bride's dowry was a main inducement to the bridegroom, and when Lorenzo put an end to the payment of lump sums there was an outcry that he kept men from marrying—although he gave compensation for the loss of the sum down by a large increase in the annual rate of interest. Nor did the fact that the gains thus acquired were invested by him for the State diminish the sense of grievance. Hostile tongues were ready to say that he misappropriated public funds for his own purposes; but granting that this were so, it would be but an informal repayment of the sums that he had lent from his own pocket for the use of the State, at a time when the costs of war were heavy and pageants and embassies alone consumed a millionaire's fortune; when, too, the whole credit of Florence was dependent on the banking-house of the Medici.

Perhaps the heaviest accusation against him is his destruction

of the liberties of Florence. But, once more, is this fact? He found no republic and he destroyed none. If he enhanced his own rule, he was profoundly convinced that the monarchic idea, in the guise of freedom, was the only one that suited the Florentines, and that in his personal strength lay the secret of stable power and prosperity for Florence. The highly organised system of home government that he created was doubtless so constituted that the Medicean party was fortified; but it is also incontestable that his private interest coincided with the public good. Whatever absolutism he wielded was won by popularity, not by force. His sway was the sway of personal charm. 'If I did not think,' wrote Piero Vespucci, 'that I 'should be restored to office, and by your favour, I should not 'believe in Christ nor in any power upon earth. . . . It is only 'for love of you that I can be patient.'

The proof of Lorenzo's sowing lies in his reaping. When he succeeded Cosimo, Florence was still distracted by wars which were scarcely over, and though her importance was increasing she did not hold rank among the nations of Europe. When he died, there was peace not only in his realm, but throughout the whole of Italy, a result largely due to his arbitration. And, more than this, Florence counted as an equal among the Powers—her counsel was even sought by the Emperor, her good will coveted by France. Louis XI. and Anne de Beaujeu were among his most cordial friends. Yet, unlike Milan and Naples, Lorenzo set his face against the interference of foreign countries. 'I 'dislike,' he wrote to the Ambassador at Rome, 'these ultra-'montanes and barbarians beginning to interfere in Italy. We 'are so disunited and so deceitful that I believe that nothing 'but shame and loss would be our lot.' The man of insight is the real prophet; had Lorenzo lived, Charles VIII. would not have been welcomed in Florence. England, like France, was on excellent terms with him and supplied his State with wool on free-trade principles. Nor was his authority less in Italy. To the Vatican he finally made himself indispensable, in spite of his opposition to Papal tyranny. With his allies, King Ferrante of Naples and Ludovico Sforza of Milan, he maintained amicable if mistrustful relations; and even commercial jealousy did not destroy the respect he forced from Venice. Lorenzo had learned to make diplomacy into a brilliant and a flexible weapon.

He kept the life political well apart from the life poetical. Of Lorenzo the poet it is impossible to speak in a few pages, or without a wide knowledge of Italian. Mr. Horsburgh may place him rather too high, but he gives us a delightful study of his poems, which it would be idle to reproduce. Still, the poet was

the man and the man the poet, and we shall find in his works the summary of himself. First and foremost it is his poetry which has given him his lasting niche in history. He revived the despised Tuscan vernacular as a literary language, the tongue which, since the glorious days when it was created by Dante and Petrarch and Boccaccio, had lost its pristine dignity, deposed by the all-prevailing Latin. The rehabilitation of Italian came with all the greater force from a classical scholar, and it was characteristic of this advanced spirit that, long before all others, he should have seen that a great native literature could only find its medium in a great native tongue. He had, too, the instinct to choose the subjects that best suited the Tuscan—the homely life of Tuscan peasants, the changeful charms of Tuscan country. On these two themes he is at his best, and if he is not a great poet, he is a delicious one. Lorenzo's pen was fertile. There are folk-songs and eclogues and idylls—*Corinto* and the *Caccia* and the *Ambra* and the fragrant 'Welcome to 'the May.' There are the *Canti Carnascialeschi*, the unblushing Carnival songs, and the 'Lauds,' the fervent hymns, which are as sincere as the *Canti*. Or we may take up his *SS. Giovanni e Paolo*, a Mystery Play, in some ways his most interesting work, since in the character of Julian the Apostate—perhaps also in parts of that of Constantine—he seems to be portraying himself. He is said to have taken a part in it; he probably played Julian *con amore*. Its subject, too, the attitude of Rome towards the 'New Religion,' is one that found personal response in the man who followed both Christ and Plato—who welcomed each new form of old beliefs with the sanguine ardour of the Renaissance.

The play was written before the advent of Savonarola. The most dramatic episode of Lorenzo's life was reserved for his last years. It was not till 1483 that the great Dominican came to Florence from Ferrara, but having no success in a city of which he hated the culture and where Fra Mariano drew all men to him, he stayed but a short while and went away. Recalled in 1490 to San Marco, he devoted himself to the novices, and it was his addresses to them on the Apocalypse that first attracted the outside world. His audience increased. From the convent room he had to move, first into the courtyard—where he stood up (we are told) 'close to a damask rose-bush,' his hearers crowded about him—and, later, into the Duomo, where all Florence came to hear him. But to Lorenzo, Savonarola was never the fashionable preacher. From the outset he hankered after him with a strange, almost pathetic insistence. His feelings may have been enhanced by the pique which Savonarola's

disdainful neglect occasioned. Lorenzo was constantly at San Marco, it was his most highly favoured monastery; he kept his antiques in its gardens; but when he came, Savonarola withdrew and took no pains to see him. 'A stranger has come into my 'house and does not deign to visit me,' said Lorenzo. Yet he returned there again and again. And when his last hour came, it was Savonarola whom he sent for. This time the 'stranger' did not refuse to visit him, and at last the *dilettante* and the saint—the two whom Nature had made adversaries—met face to face.

It was in 1492, four years after his wife's death, that Lorenzo's last illness overcame him. He lay dying of gout at his villa at Careggi. Every remedy had been tried. The great doctor, Lazaro of Pavia, had given him his famous medicine—a concoction of crushed pearls—in vain. His favourite sister, Bianca, told him that the end had come. 'Thou hast lived like a man 'of lofty mind,' she said; 'quit this life bravely, and also 'piously.' A priest had shriven him and administered extreme unction. He had summoned his son, Piero, to his room, and given his last counsels for the State. Angelo Poliziano, hardly able to restrain his sobs, stood at his bedside holding both his hands; and presently Pico arrived and sat by him also, talking of such matters as Lorenzo loved. 'I should have been sorry 'to die without being a little gladdened by thy presence,' was Lorenzo's greeting. He grew exhausted; he tried to speak, but he could not bring out his words. 'Dost thou hear, Angelo, 'dost thou hear?' he whispered to Poliziano. And when Poliziano knelt down the better to catch his words, 'I wish that 'death had spared me,' said Lorenzo, 'till I had been able to 'complete your libraries.'

It was perhaps the strongest proof of the strange power that Savonarola exercised over him, that at this moment he should have asked him to come. It was not as a priest, for all that a priest could do was done. Nor was it his favourite, Fra Mariano, but the Dominican whom he desired to have with him, as if he felt that none other could safely speed his soul to heaven. Savonarola came at his call. 'The Dominican exhorted him to 'keep the Faith, to live well if he were spared, to die calmly if 'he were to die.' He replied that he held the Faith unshaken, and that 'if God willed it, nothing was pleasanter to him than death.' As Savonarola prepared to depart, Lorenzo called out, 'Alas, 'Father! your benediction before you go!' Savonarola gave it—his prayers broken by the sobs of those around, while Lorenzo alone remained serene. Conscious to the end, he lay and listened to the story of the Passion, moving his lips or his hands to show

that he still understood. Then 'someone brought a silver crucifix 'and held it close to his face. He kissed it again and again,' and as he kissed it, he died.

So runs the account of Poliziano, an eye-witness, in a letter to Antiquario. To the unbiased mind it must, we think, remain the one authentic account. But there is another report over which there has been disputation. It is written some time after the event and proceeds from prejudiced authorities, since its only sources are men who were the followers of Savonarola. According to this story, 'Lorenzo's last hours were spent in 'an access of terror and remorse'; and, longing to 'receive 'absolution from the only honest friar he had known,' he sent for Savonarola. The Dominican came reluctantly, and Lorenzo confessed that three sins in particular were weighing upon his mind—

'his responsibility for the sack of Volterra, his action in regard to the Dowry Fund, and the bloody punishment inflicted on the Pazzi conspirators. Before granting absolution Savonarola imposed three conditions—that Lorenzo should repent and have a lively sense of God's mercy; that he should restore . . . all that he had unjustly gained; that he should give back liberty to Florence. To the first two conditions Lorenzo signified his consent. On hearing the third, he angrily turned his back upon the Friar without speaking. Savonarola at once retired . . . leaving Lorenzo unabsolved. After a few hours he died, unshriven, tortured to the last by his sins.'

The story, first given by Cinozzi, who got it, he says, from Fra Silvestro, 'one of Savonarola's chief lieutenants,' is followed by the 'Biographia Latina,' likewise resting on Fra Silvestro and also on his comrade, Fra Domenico. The two later biographers, Pico's nephew and Burlamacchi, 'have not, in any 'strict sense, a contemporary authority,' nor have they even been proved to be independent of each other. Thus the only important evidence is that of Fra Silvestro and Fra Domenico, who professed to have had their knowledge from Savonarola himself. But they lived in a day when men believed what they wanted to believe, so long as it helped their propaganda. And apart from the testimony on the other side—the fact that Poliziano was with Lorenzo; that Cerretani's contemporary account of the end, and Benedetto Dei's letter describing it, not more than a week after it happened, corroborate Poliziano's picture—apart from the later date of Fra Silvestro and Fra Domenico's chronicles, there are better reasons for disbelieving them. It is easier to imagine that these men were like most others, than that Lorenzo and Savonarola acted out of their

characters—that Savonarola broke the seal of confession (since none other heard his converse with Lorenzo); and that Lorenzo was in a state of remorse which was opposed to the whole of his nature, which, more than this, was quite incompatible with the calm and cheerful mood recorded by Poliziano and Dei. And the three crimes reported as tormenting Lorenzo act as witnesses against the legend. He could hardly have been troubled by the sack of Volterra, since he did not know of its cruelty till it was past; his transactions concerning the Dowry Fund, at worst effected for the benefit of the State, were not such as to disturb the conscience of a prince even better than Lorenzo, and he had done things far worse without regret; nor is it overstrained to apply the same arguments to his punishment of the Pazzi conspirators—the punishment of criminals, not of innocent victims. As for the liberty of Florence, even were his guilt towards it granted, no death-bed action of his could have restored it. The impartial mind can hardly fail to recognise the improbability of the Friar's version of his last hours, and it is not surprising to find that all the best writers upon him—Roscoe, von Reumont, Horsburgh, Armstrong, Creighton—are of one mind in supporting Poliziano; or that Savonarola's protagonist, Villari, should cling to the other narrative.

There is one more argument against it. If Savonarola had refused to absolve Lorenzo, would he have allowed, as he did, his body to be brought to San Marco? Yet here it remained till it was removed to the Sacristy of San Lorenzo.

Such is the last resting-place of the man, made up of many men, who was called Lorenzo de' Medici. He stood, as we have said, at the highest point of a great tradition. He was the epitome of an age.

There is one thing peculiar to such periods. They almost invariably represent a time of taste rather than of conviction; they show a desire to reconcile clashing elements, not to conquer them. The Platonic passion for unity—for proof that all religions, all branches of knowledge, are one—was a fitting embodiment of this tendency. And the tendency did not die; it found inheritors. Erasmus and Sir Thomas More, Rabelais and Sir Thomas Browne—in our own time Tennyson also—have been apostles of reconciliation; men of intense culture, not initiators. They are far from Lorenzo the Magnificent, but insomuch they are of his race. This is what he stands for in history.

Art. III.—PITT AND THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE (1788–1791).

1. *British Foreign Office Records* (*Prussia, Russia, Holland, Sweden, Denmark*).
2. *The Auckland and Malmesbury Correspondence* (*British Museum, MS. Department*).
3. *The Chatham Papers.* H.M. Public Record Office.
4. *Political Memoranda of Francis, fifth Duke of Leeds.* Edited by Oscar Browning, M.A. Camden Society. 1884.
5. *Die Englisch-Preussische Allianz von* 1788. By F. Luckwaldt. Leipzig. 1902.
6. *Preussen und England in der Europäischen Politik*, 1785–1788. By F. K. Wittichen. Heidelberg. 1902.
7. *Quellen zur Geschichte der Deutschen Kaiserpolitik Oesterreichs.* By A. von Vivenot. Vienna. 1873.
8. *William Pitt.* By F. Salomon. Leipzig. 1901.

It is a sign of the highest statesmanship to see clearly the main issues in a complex situation, to follow them cautiously but firmly, and to take decisive action when occasion offers. These statements seem like truisms; but it is very rarely that they are fulfilled. Least of all is it the case that a young Minister, especially if he be beset by many difficulties at home, can bring to bear upon foreign affairs the continuous attention, the cautious restraint, varied with prudent boldness, which command success. Yet the younger Pitt displayed these qualities in a marked degree during a succession of crises which shook the European fabric shortly before that greater convulsion, the French Revolution. The object of this article is to survey, in the light of some new materials, his action in the years 1788–1791, so far as it concerned Prussia, Holland, and the States menaced by Catherine II. of Russia and Joseph II. of Austria.

The mention of those potentates recalls the fact that their schemes threatened the break-up of the old system long before the *débâcle* occurred in France. The storm-centres of Europe in the years 1784–1789 were at their capitals. From St. Petersburg went forth the decrees or schemes for the seizure of the Crimea, the preparations for the expulsion of the Ottomans from Europe, and the subjugation of Poland and Sweden; while Joseph II., more visionary than the Czarina, unsettled his own peoples and shook the Germanic system by proposing

to annex Bavaria, transferring to the Elector the Austrian Netherlands. The future of the Pays Bas was further complicated by strifes in the Dutch Republic between the hereditary Stadtholder, William V., and the Democrats or Patriots, who had a large majority in the chief towns and in the estates of the chief provinces, notably that of Holland. His sluggishness, his unpopularity owing to his British predilections during the war of 1780-1783, and the many limitations on his authority, rendered his downfall almost certain. In vain did his far more spirited consort, Wilhelmina, appeal for help to Frederick the Great, and, after his decease, to her brother, Frederick William II. The policy of the Court of Berlin was to win the favour of France; and as that Power had recently framed a close alliance with the Dutch Republic, the pleasure-loving nephew of the great Frederick advised Wilhelmina to find in France the means of staving off the blows of the Patriots. Such, in brief, was the position of affairs in the year 1786. France still enjoyed the alliance of Austria; she was courted by Russia and Prussia; she had gained over the Dutch Republic, and maintained her traditional friendship with Sweden. The revival of the French East India Company and the completion of part of the new works at Cherbourg seemed to threaten England's interests in the Channel and in the Orient. The Island Power looked out on a world that was avowedly, or by implication, hostile.

Yet this was the year in which Pitt carried through his commercial treaty with France, whereby he hoped to assure friendlier relations in the future. The wisdom of that treaty was sharply questioned by his own Foreign Secretary, the Marquis of Carmarthen, who had reason to know the power of French diplomacy at all the capitals of the Continent. In vain had he knocked at the door at Vienna and St. Petersburg. In vain had he sought to stem the Gallophile tide at Berlin and The Hague. When everything seemed untoward for British diplomacy he deemed it foolish to make a commercial treaty with the arch-enemy; and, in the light of the Gallophobe despatches of Sir James Harris (afterwards Earl of Malmesbury) from The Hague, Pitt's conduct in carrying through the French commercial treaty seems an act of almost insane idealism. So at least it appeared to Carmarthen and Harris, who prophesied that Free Trade with our natural enemy was merely a snare. Events were to show the contrary. Soon it was the French who cried out that Pitt had ensnared them.

Equally hopeful and pacific was Pitt's attitude towards the quarrels in the Dutch Republic. Failing to procure any satisfactory assurances from Prussia (whose envoy at The Hague

favoured the Patriots), he enjoined on Harris a watchful but non-committal policy. From this he refused to budge until there were signs that the Patriots, if victorious, would hand over their East India Company to France. Then Pitt began to bestir himself. As is well known, the folly of the Patriots in detaining the Princess Wilhelmina, during an attempted journey to The Hague, ruffled the pride of her brother and opened up the prospect of joint action by Great Britain and Prussia. Pitt thereupon counselled bolder action, which Harris carried out with masterly skill at The Hague. The crisis, however, dragged on, owing to the intrigues of the Gallophiles at Berlin and the incurable inconstancy of Frederick William. Fortunately his most trusted Minister at that time, Count Hertzberg, was in favour of a close union with England in the Dutch crisis. To this conclusion he had been brought by the arguments of one of the ablest of British envoys, Joseph Ewart.

In an age when England could boast of ambassadors so talented as Harris, Fitzherbert, and Elliot, Ewart stands forth prominently owing to his forceful character, foresight, and fiery zeal. The son of a Scottish minister in Dumfriesshire, he imbibed those habits of persistence in effort, steadfastness of aim, and thoroughness in work which command success. The same qualities raised his younger brother, William, to a high position in Liverpool in partnership with a neighbour, Gladstone, the name of whose famous son recalls the early days of struggle and success of the Lowlanders in that seaport. The Ewart family has given several officers of distinction to the British Army and Navy; but in none of its members has the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum* shone more brightly than in Joseph Ewart. By the kindness of Major-General Ewart the most important of the letters of his ancestor have been utilised for this article. Ewart's activity and power won the attention of the British envoy at Dresden during his sojourn in that city as a private tutor. He became Secretary of Legation there, and soon after at Berlin. There his energy, insight, and force of character gained him the post of ambassador soon after his crowning success, the completion of the Anglo-Prussian treaty of August, 1788. Early in his career at Berlin he attracted the notice of Hertzberg, who conceived great regard for him, and finally showed him nearly all his confidential papers. Working in concert, the two men sought to prepare the way for an Anglo-Prussian league, in which Sweden, Poland, and Turkey were to be included.

Possibly any such combination would have remained visionary had not an event occurred in the East which gave a sharp tilt to the diplomatic kaleidoscope. While Frederick William was

still doubtful whether to act against the Dutch Patriots in the way which family honour demanded, the Sultan of Turkey flung down the gauntlet to Russia. This event, quite unexpected at Berlin, as at other capitals, cleared the way for the forward move which Pitt and Hertzberg desired. It freed Frederick William from fear of an attack from Vienna; for the Russo-Austrian alliance involved the Hapsburgs in the quarrel, and thereby left France isolated for military purposes at the very time when the shadow of bankruptcy and revolution was swiftly drawing on. The situation, therefore, underwent a bewildering change. France, far from controlling the arena, was now left comparatively helpless; while England and Prussia, laying aside their mutual suspicions, prepared to form a strong combination. Pitt undertook to stalemate the French fleet, while Prussia launched her troops, already mustering at Wesel, into the United Provinces.

The results are well known. France did no more than rattle the sword in the scabbard. The Patriots, who had relied on help from Paris, were left in the lurch, and their bands speedily melted away under the skilful moves of the Duke of Brunswick. The surrender of Amsterdam on October 10, 1787, ended all open resistance and all disposition at Versailles to adopt a spirited policy. Far from that, Montmorin, the French Foreign Minister, issued a declaration on October 27 that France had never intended to intervene in Dutch affairs. So ignominious a statement had never in modern times emanated from Versailles, and it caused all the friends of France to hang their heads, while her influence in the Dutch Republic instantly vanished and was replaced by that of Great Britain and Prussia.

The triumph of Pitt and Hertzberg astonished an age which had come to believe in the omnipotence of France. But statesmen could not believe that her rebuff was more than temporary. Looking only at the good nature of Louis XVI. and the weakness of Montmorin, they failed to discern the financial and political paralysis creeping over that Power, and believed that she must exact a speedy revenge. This feeling it was which had induced Hertzberg, on September 27, to make overtures to the Court of St. James with a view to an alliance. The caution of Pitt and Carmarthen is very noteworthy. The latter thus cautiously referred to them in a despatch to Harris:

'The King of Prussia has expressed an idea of a Triple Alliance between Great Britain, Prussia, and the [Dutch] Republic. The effect of such an alliance between England and Prussia, and the extent to which it should go, would necessarily require great

consideration ; and it does not precisely appear what the views of his Prussian Majesty are on this subject. But an alliance between Great Britain and the United Provinces is so clearly advantageous to both parties that there seems no reason for wishing to delay the proposal.'

One member of the Cabinet, the venerable Earl Camden, strongly advocated an alliance with Prussia, as will appear from the following new letter :

Wildernesse : October 18, 1787.

'Dear Pitt,—I have thought much since we parted upon the subject of an alliance with Prussia, and as far as I am able to judge upon what passed at the meeting, and my own conceptions, I am of opinion that such an alliance is at this time in all respects a most desirable acquisition. In the first place, the safety and security of Holland will be most effectually accomplished by such a confederacy, and we shall be in no danger of losing that country again by any external attack ; and this I hold to be of the first importance to England, who must always live in fear if that Power should be thrown in the scale of France. We have escaped miraculously from the most perilous situation we ever experienced, and shall be mad if we slip the opportunity of rooting out the French interest in that country for ever, which cannot be done but by building a wall of protection round it towards the land, and that will be completely effected by a Prussian alliance.

'Another consequence will follow by (*sic*) this union, that Prussia will be emancipated from that state of slavish dependence upon France which has kept her in a condition of timid inactivity for many years ; and tho' it might be a convenient policy for the old King, who looked not beyond his own life, to spend the remainder of it in peace, is yet a base and feeble system for a great kingdom to live in a continual dread of displeasing a Power who never can be a cordial ally nor be disposed to make any return for this complaisant submission, her only end for keeping that kingdom quiet being to secure her own purposes somewhere, and principally to ingratiate herself with the Emperor—to hold out friendship to both, but to be a true ally to neither. The late perfidious treatment of France has exasperated Prussia, and the Turkish war has set her at ease ; the present moment is therefore so propitious that we can never expect to find that Court so open to a confederacy at any other time if we lose the present opportunity.'

He then scouts the notion that France would join the two empires in the scheme of driving her old allies, the Turks, out of Europe, or that she would favour the Belgic-Bavarian exchange and acquire Austrian Flanders as the price of her connivance. He banishes these spectres of the mind with the sage remark that 'an unlikely and distant possibility can never be 'an argument against a present advantage.' Pitt and Car-

marthen weighed matters differently. They believed an Austro-Franco-Russian league to be a not unlikely contingency, and they doubted the stability of Prussian policy. Accordingly, on December 2, Carmarthen wrote to Ewart that a compact with the Court of Berlin would cause great jealousy among other Powers whose friendship was desirable, and might perhaps bring about a hostile Triple Alliance, rumours of which were afloat. Until all fear of cementing so formidable a league had passed away England and Prussia would do well to act together privately.

The caution of Pitt and Carmarthen is very remarkable. Both of them, especially the latter, had favoured a union with Austria rather than Prussia; and even down to the spring of 1788, when the Hapsburg State was on the brink of war with Turkey, they turned a deaf ear to the renewed offers of Hertzberg. On April 2 Carmarthen warned Ewart that an Anglo-Prussian alliance was not opportune unless France sought her revenge in Holland, or unless other States would join it and thus counteract the jealousy which it might arouse. England also frowned on the notion, now suggested at Berlin, of a joint intervention in favour of the Sultan against the Imperial Courts. Least of all would she guarantee his lands, except those which he might retain at a future peace. Carmarthen added these words:

'The great object which we have in view is the continuance of peace, as far as that is not inconsistent with our essential interests. It is with that view that the alliance of Holland has been thought so material, as rendering any attack upon us less probable. With the same view we are desirous of cultivating the closest connections with the Court of Berlin.'

He concluded by directing Ewart to discourage the ambitious schemes of exchange of territory which were now beginning to take shape at Berlin. On January 15, 1788, the indefatigable Ewart warned his Government that Prussia was doing her utmost indirectly to help the Turks in their struggle against the two empires; but that, in case the Moslems had to surrender Moldavia and Wallachia to Joseph II., Prussia intended to gain outright an indemnity from that sovereign, or else to insist on his ceding Galicia to Poland, while that republic handed over to her the towns and districts of Danzig and Thorn, which had long been coveted at Berlin.

Such were the plans already formulated at that city. It is interesting to observe that from the outset the Pitt Ministry decidedly opposed them. Carmarthen stated to Ewart on May 14

that it would be best to limit the proposed Anglo-Prussian arrangement to a guarantee of the Dutch Constitution, or else to postpone it until Sweden, Denmark, and Portugal could be included in a general defensive league. To both of these suggestions the Francophile Minister, Count Finckenstein, offered strenuous opposition, on the ground that they favoured England but hampered Prussia. Hertzberg partly concurred with his colleague; and Ewart's efforts failed to convince the two Foreign Secretaries of the desirability of a limited alliance relating solely to Dutch affairs, or of a defensive concert with the smaller States. Thus early was seen the contrariety of views which before long paralysed the aims of the Triple Alliance. Pitt and Carmarthen sought to uphold the *status quo* against all possible efforts by France. The Prussian statesmen sought to rearrange boundaries in the East to the advantage of Prussia.

Besides this opposition of principles there were several differences between the two Courts on matters of detail; and but for the dangers involved by isolation it is unlikely that any agreement would have been arrived at. But, as the Eastern question became more acute, the need of a partner was felt more strongly at Berlin; and the British Government laid its plans for working on the susceptibilities of the Prussian monarch during his visit to the Prince and Princess of Orange at Loo. The surroundings were highly favourable for such an attempt, and it was known that he had expressed a desire to see Sir James Harris. That envoy had just enjoyed the advantage of an interview with Pitt and Carmarthen at London and came back prepared to play a bold game. He was charged to waive the question of further allies (Sweden and Denmark) if Frederick William objected to the delay which this would cause; but in the main the British side of the case was to be adhered to. Harris won a brilliant triumph, which was assured by a bribe of 200 ducats paid to a chamberlain at a critical time if he kept from the King's apartment a partisan of France, Colonel Stein. Frederick William adopted the British case almost *in toto* on the night of June 12–13, and the Provisional Treaty of Loo was signed on the morning of the 13th, greatly to the annoyance of Hertzberg and Finckenstein at Berlin. The efforts which they put forth to alter some of its provisions were fruitless. The resulting Treaty of Berlin of August 13, 1788, was defensive in character. Great Britain and Prussia each agreed to help the other in case of attack by a force of 20,000 men; but the former was not to receive the services of such a contingent of Prussians outside Europe, or even at Gibraltar. Both Powers agreed to maintain the Constitution of the Dutch Republic by all their

forces in case of attack. Owing to the insistence of the Prussian Ministers, two secret articles were added, namely, that the stipulated military aid should not be forthcoming unless the Power demanding it had on foot a force of 44,000 men. Prussia also required the aid of a British squadron in case of need.

The efficacy of the new alliance was soon to bear the test of action. The chivalrous or reckless resolve of Gustavus III. at this very time plunged Sweden into war with Russia. It was at once stated by Catharine II. and her Ministers that this action was due to the hatred of England for Russia. She had made the same remark about the Turkish attack of a year before. The present writer is in a position to state with certainty that there is not a vestige of truth in either assertion. Sir Robert Ainslie, British Ambassador at Constantinople, foresaw that Turkish pride would take some such resolve after the repeated provocations offered by Russia; but he throughout counselled prudence and patience, in accordance with the instructions which he received from Whitehall. When the rupture came, he affirmed it to be a matter of religious conviction and racial honour for the Turks to seek to recover the Crimea, out of which they had been tricked in 1783–4, and to put an end to the claims of the Czarina upon Georgia.

The despatches of the British envoys at Stockholm and Copenhagen show the conduct of Gustavus to be less defensible. Undoubtedly he was galled by the intrigues of Catharine with the malcontent Swedish nobles, and he determined to strike a sudden blow at her from Finland while she had few troops at St. Petersburg. Here again the evidence is conclusive that neither the envoys nor the Cabinets of Great Britain and Prussia had any knowledge of the resolve which the Swedish monarch put into effect at the end of July 1788; and there is much to show that they were annoyed by it. Both at Berlin and London the Swedish Ministers had to listen to reprimands on this subject.

None the less it was clear that Gustavus must be saved from the consequences of his rashness. The alliance of Denmark with Russia now came into play and promised to distract the energies of the Swedes on the side of Norway. While the mutiny of their troops in Finland ruined the campaign in that quarter, the Danish Army under the command of the Prince Royal prepared to seize Gottenburg. This effort would have been crowned with success had not the British and Prussian envoys at the Danish Court taken swift and concerted action. Ewart counselled a bold initiative; and Hugh Elliot, British envoy at Copenhagen, was the man to take it incisively. He crossed the Sound, repaired to the headquarters of the Danish Prince Royal, now

near Gottenburg, and by threatening him with the vengeance of the allies persuaded him to sign the Armistice of Uddewalla. Gustavus III., who had hurried to the rescue of Gottenburg with an ill-armed band of dalesmen, admitted that Elliot's action saved Sweden from a terrible blow, which would have led to the revolt of the malcontents within and partition from her hostile neighbours. The description of these events, as given in the 'Memoirs of Hugh Elliot,' is borne out by his official reports and those of the British Consul at Gottenburg. As it was, Gustavus, with wonderful energy, was able to make headway against the Russians in the campaigns of 1789–90, while England and Prussia secured the neutrality of Denmark.

The influence of the Swedish campaigns on the Eastern question was very great. The Turks must quickly have been overborne by the two empires but for the need of keeping the best of the Russian troops in Finland to hold at bay the brave and pertinacious Swedes. Several times the allies (and the Sultan also) furnished subsidies or loans to Gustavus to enable him to continue the war; and Catharine was ever haunted by the fear that this unreal neutrality would give place to open hostility.

Here she argued wrongly. Great Britain and Prussia were determined to maintain the equilibrium in the Baltic, and were well aware that this could not be assured until the power and the designs of Catharine were alike lowered. Hence their repeated injunctions to Elliot in the spring and summer of 1789 to win Denmark over to the Triple Alliance and thus secure Sweden on the west. On June 24 the Duke of Leeds (Carmarthen had now succeeded to that title) wrote to Elliot at Copenhagen: 'I cannot too often repeat the earnest desire of this Government 'to conciliate the Court of Denmark in the first instance; nor 'do we lose sight of another material object—I mean, a cordial 'permanent connection with Russia.' Elsewhere Pitt and Leeds insist on the need of restoring the *status quo* in the Baltic and of discouraging the lofty schemes which the King of Sweden was beginning to weave 'for the abasement of Russia.' In short, their Baltic policy was essentially conservative, and herein they had the support of Prussia. No cleavage of policy is here discernible between the two States. They advanced money to Gustavus, and they showed an equal measure of disgust when that monarch (under the influence of hatred of the French Revolution) suddenly came to terms with Catharine in the Peace of Werela (August 14, 1790) on nearly the same conditions which they had offered to obtain for him. The wilful *volte face* of Gustavus dealt a serious blow to the Triple Alliance, and prevented the realisation of that union with the smaller States for which Pitt was preparing.

The defection of Sweden (for such it must be termed) had a fatal effect on the fortunes of Turkey and Poland. The community of interests of those two States had been increasingly seen by the leaders at Constantinople and Warsaw. Whenever they resolved to shake off Muscovite control they inevitably tended to coalesce under the aegis of some military Power. In former times they turned to France ; now they turned to Prussia. For it was one of the benefits of the Triple Alliance (as Earl Camden had foretold) that Prussia recovered from the torpor that had lain upon her and boldly confronted not only France but also Russia. In fact, no sooner was the solidity of the Triple Alliance tested in regard to Baltic affairs than the Court of Berlin began to concoct far-reaching plans hostile to the interests of the two empires.

By way of preparation she concluded two treaties with Turkey and Poland. That of January 31, 1790, with the Porte was signed secretly by Diez, Prussian envoy at Constantinople ; and he certainly exceeded his powers in so doing. He pledged his country to make war on Russia and Austria in the spring, and not to lay down its arms until the Sultan secured ' an honour- ' able and stable peace.' The recovery of the Crimea was the object set forth in case the Turks were successful. The Sultan, on his side, promised to compel Austria to restore Galicia to the Poles, who were to be included in a general alliance ; while Prussia, Great Britain, Holland, Sweden, and Poland undertook to guarantee the Sultan's possessions at the end of the war. It is needless to say that Prussia expected to secure Danzig and Thorn from the Poles for the services rendered to them. Such was this remarkable compact. Its aims seem to us now visionary in the extreme ; but, considering the exhaustion of Russia and Austria, the strength of the Prussian Army and the power of the Triple Alliance, the programme was practicable, provided that England favoured it and Sweden held firm. These conditions were lacking. Pitt and Leeds frowned on the scheme and early dissociated themselves from a policy which opened up several avenues of strife. Further, the Nootka Sound incident brought England and Spain to the brink of war in the months of April–October 1790, and imposed caution at Whitehall. Consequently Pitt protested against the Diez Treaty, and Prussia long refused to ratify it, though she did not disavow it until an entirely new situation had arisen.

Prussia's schemes might have prospered had she framed a close and cordial union with Poland. Her envoy signed a compact with that Republic at Warsaw on March 29, 1790, but it was loose and unsatisfactory ; the military succours offered were

limited to 18,000 men, and the chief significance of the incident lay in the facilities which it gave to Prussia to march her forces through Volhynia to cut the communications of the Russians campaigning in Moldavia. The prospect of such a blow caused consternation at St. Petersburg. But it soon appeared that the Prusso-Polish alliance had little validity. In truth Hertzberg saw in it merely the means of compelling the Poles to surrender Danzig and Thorn in exchange for Prussian protection and a favourable treaty of commerce. In order to make the most of this latter argument he pressed to their utmost the rigorous customs dues levied on Polish goods entering Prussian territory, particularly those borne down the Vistula. Merchants at Warsaw, Thorn, and Danzig complained that they were nearly ruined by these imposts; and Hailes, the British envoy at Warsaw, declared the feeling against Prussia to be extremely strong. The Poles appealed to Pitt, who was at this time considering the question of a close commercial union with Poland; but he advised them to humour the Court of Berlin by surrendering Danzig (not Thorn) in return for a liberal commercial treaty. The rise of a strong national sentiment in the Republic thwarted all efforts at such a compromise, and finally the Diet declared against any cession of territory. For these causes the Prusso-Polish compact led to no result, and the Triple Alliance did not gain the support which Ewart and Hailes expected from that quarter.

It is noteworthy that Lord Auckland, British ambassador at The Hague, and William Grenville distinctly opposed any union with Poland, as tending to enlarge British responsibilities; but Pitt, in an interview with the Polish noble, Count Oginski, at the close of 1790, spoke in the most cordial terms of Poland's prospects. Early in the next year Leeds instructed Hailes and Jackson (the latter was doing duty for Ewart at Berlin) to prepare the way for an alliance with Poland, as also with Denmark and Sweden, if that were possible. A union with the two latter was at best precarious; but it is difficult to exaggerate the importance of the issues now at stake. Poland was on the eve of its ever-memorable efforts at regeneration, and, had she met with support from Prussia, there can be little doubt that King Stanislas and his patriotic advisers would easily have crushed the efforts of the Russophile and malcontent nobles. The consolidated Polish monarchy would have added strength to the Triple, or rather Quadruple, Alliance, which could have imposed terms on Russia and secured a permanent balance of power in Eastern Europe.

This conjecture is far from fanciful. Already the Triple Alliance, despite sharp divergences of view at London and

Berlin, had succeeded in coercing Austria at the Congress of Reichenbach (June–July 1790). The details of that important event have so often been described that they need not be referred to here, except in order to notice that the Prussian statesmen were brought to acquiesce in the policy of the *status quo*, on which Pitt and Leeds had throughout insisted as the only safe and honourable solution of existing disputes in Turkey and the Austrian Netherlands. Leopold II. (the successor of Joseph II.) was wise enough to accept this solution as far preferable to a war with Prussia. Austria accordingly retired from the conflict with Turkey, agreed to give up her conquests in that quarter, and to restore to the discontented Belgians their former rights and privileges. On the other hand, the triumph of British policy at Reichenbach (largely due to the skill and firmness of Ewart) saved the Hapsburg Court from the pressure of Prussia's demands for the surrender of a large part of Galicia to the Poles (of course with a view to securing Danzig and Thorn for herself) and the recognition of the independence of the Austrian Netherlands. Accordingly, Hertzberg had no less cause than Leopold and his advisers to dislike the Reichenbach Convention. Frederick William II. also regretted that he had not drawn the sword rather than pass by the opportunity for dismembering the Austrian dominions. In truth the only States satisfied with this compact were Great Britain, which sought to uphold the existing system, and Turkey and Poland, which were menaced with partition or exchanges almost equivalent to partition. At the end of the conference Frederick William observed to Hertzberg that they must now insist on gaining the support of Great Britain in compelling Russia to restore her recent conquests (*not* the Crimea) to Turkey.

Here we touch upon a potent cause of the breakdown of the Triple Alliance. Pitt and Leeds were no less convinced than the Prussian statesmen of the need of keeping within bounds the ambition of the Czarina. The allies, aided by Gustavus III., had dispelled her dream of chasing the Turks from Europe and enthroning her favourite grandson, Constantine, in the Mosque of St. Sophia. But there was a widespread conviction that the equilibrium of Europe would be perilously impaired if she persevered with the alternative scheme of conquering Bessarabia, Moldavia, and Wallachia for her beloved Potemkin. That melodramatic warrior was known to be preparing a fleet at Sevastopol with a view to a dash on Constantinople and the securing of Roumania. The fear of seeing him installed at Bukharest undoubtedly contributed to Leopold's retirement from the Turkish war. But scarcely had that sovereign signed the Reichenbach Convention

before he began to incline towards Russia, and, in order to favour her interests, multiplied difficulties with the Turks and with the Belgians, until the patience of England and Prussia was well-nigh exhausted. Those Powers threatened him with hostilities unless he settled Belgian affairs in conformity to his promises; and at the close of 1790 he assented to The Hague Convention. But all their remonstrances failed to hold him to the Reichenbach terms so far as concerned Turkey. The fortress and district of Old Orsova were finally the fruits of his pertinacious and dishonourable haggling. It was the last and the meanest success in the career of Kaunitz.

The Machiavellian policy of Leopold was not the only cause of the failure of Pitt and Hertzberg to coerce Catharine. That astute ruler had succeeded in winning over Gustavus to her side by holding out hopes of a monarchical crusade against revolutionary France. The woes of Marie Antoinette now obsessed his spirit and blotted out the memory of his debt of honour to the Sultan. He even let it be known at London early in the year 1791 that, if a British fleet sailed to the Baltic, it would not find admittance to a single harbour in Sweden or Finland. Ewart cherished hopes of overcoming these scruples, and signs were not wanting that Gustavus might relax this resolve for pecuniary considerations; but his untrustworthiness undoubtedly hampered British policy severely at this juncture. Prussia insisted on the despatch of a British fleet to the Baltic, in conformity with the secret article of the treaty of August 1788. But how could it operate there if Swedish ports were closed? The Court of Berlin also required, though less pressingly, the entry of a British squadron into the Black Sea. But that again was open to many objections. The naval power of Great Britain was overwhelming. It had sufficed to coerce Spain in the Nootka Sound affair; but Russia in the present circumstances was almost unassailable by sea.

On the questions at issue between the allies and Russia no difference of view existed between London and Berlin at the outset. Both Courts demanded that Russia should restore her last conquests made at the expense of Turkey, and in particular the large tract of land north of Oczakoff, between the rivers Bug and Dniester. In order to present the point of view of both Courts it may be well to quote from letters written by Ewart to Pitt during the furlough of the former in England in the winter of 1790–91:

London: November 16, 1790.

'. . . In regard to the overtures despatched two days ago to Berlin and St. Petersburg, I can venture to assure you, Sir, that they will

give compleat satisfaction to the King of Prussia ; and tho' the Empress of Russia may, and probably will, make some difficulties at first, there can be little doubt of her accepting the terms offered before the spring, since she never can venture to risk the consequences of a refusal. But I beg leave to observe that, as the proposal of the Court of Berlin to offer that the allies should employ their influence at Constantinople to make the Porte renounce all claim to the Crimea and to guarantee it to Russia on condition of the *status quo* being re-established by the latter—as this idea has been approved of here, it appears necessary that the allies should lose no time in holding out to the Turks the prospect of their obtaining a security, by sea and land, against the future attempts of Russia, on the principle you preferred when I stated the two alternatives ; and I submit it to your consideration how far it might be proper for this country and Holland to give the Porte to understand that they would be ready, in contracting defensive engagements, to stipulate a naval assistance sufficient for protecting their coasts, and particularly for overawing Russia in the Black Sea. The effect of such a measure would naturally be to establish our influence at Constantinople on a most permanent footing, and dispose the Porte to agree to whatever commercial or other proposals may be judged advisable.'

Ewart then states that Russia is working hard through her agents at Constantinople to undermine the influence of the allies ; but on December 13, 1790, he assures Pitt of 'the 'improbability, or rather impossibility,' of Russia resisting the pressure now put upon her, provided that it was firm and persistent. He, however, remarks that Berlin harbours doubts of the trustworthiness of England. On January 15, 1791, while at Bath, he writes as follows concerning the King of Prussia :

'. . . His critical situation and the intelligence he receives from all quarters that England will never venture to send a fleet to the Baltic excite much anxiety and distrust in his mind. Should these sentiments continue, after the communication of the last despatches, nothing less, I believe, than the positive, tho' eventual, assurance above mentioned could be sufficient to prevent the King of Prussia from losing confidence in the power of this country, as well as in his own, in consequence of which, I am afraid, he would be inclined to listen to every scrambling project, many of which have already been proposed to him. I shall not intrude upon your time, at present, with any more remarks of mine on the necessity of Russia being made to restore all its conquests to the Porte, not so much on account of Oczakow and its district, which, however important to the Turks, are only secondary considerations when compared with the decisive influence which the issue of the present discussion between the allies and Russia must have on the strength and permanency of the actual system of politicks of this country. I only beg leave to repeat my firm conviction that, whatever may be the

event of the overtures sent to Spain, Sweden, and Denmark, the decided co-operation of the allies could not fail to make the Court of Petersburg accept their terms; and that, in the event of this being accomplished, either in the first instance by negotiation, or by Russia being overawed, I should answer for the whole force of Prussia being always at our disposal; while, in the opposite supposition, all our influence at Berlin and in the North in general would soon be of no avail, which would make it impossible to maintain the present system long and, still more so, to extend it.'

Neither Ewart nor Pitt as yet knew that Hertzberg had been playing them false. On or just before December 6, 1790, the Prussian Minister had assured Alopeus, Catharine's envoy at Berlin, that, if his mistress objected to the surrender of such a trifle (*peu de chose*) as Oczakoff and its district, Prussia would readily come to terms with her, provided that she helped the Berlin Court to secure Danzig and Thorn. Alopeus' report of this offer reached St. Petersburg early in the new year (N.S.), when the British ambassador, Whitworth, was doing his best to coerce that Government. The result may readily be conceived. The British and Prussian demands were forthwith rejected, the Russian Chancellor assuring Whitworth that Catharine would run all risks rather than tarnish the glory of her reign by surrendering her conquests to a State which had unjustly attacked her. Of course she ran no risk in framing this heroic resolve. So long as Hertzberg was in power at Berlin she could rely on Prussia's benevolent neutrality. Once again, then, Danzig and Thorn crippled the Anglo-Prussian alliance. The excellence of Ewart's information from Berlin is seen in his announcing to Pitt Hertzberg's duplicity. Writing on February 11, at Bath, he says concerning Hertzberg:

'. . . He has even assured the Russian Minister at Berlin that, if the Empress would co-operate in procuring this acquisition to Prussia, the *status quo* would not be insisted on, and that it had been demanded by England, and not by the King, his master. In consequence of this language the Court of Petersburg proceeds on the supposition that Prussia has no serious intention of taking an active part; and the opinion of the Empress with regard to England may be learnt from the following passage of a letter which I have just received from the best authority: "*Qu'elle croit que depuis la paix avec la Suède, aucune flotte angloise ne pourroit opérer dans la Baltique avec quelque succès, et que le Ministre risqueroit de perdre sa popularité par cette expédition.*" I am likewise assured that these ideas come chiefly from Count Woronzow [Voronzoff].* I need not observe

* Russian Minister in London.

how much the Empress of Russia is encouraged by these circumstances to persist in her demand of Oczakow and its district, and to form new projects with respect to Poland, Turkey, and the Baltic. . . .'

Ewart's forward policy met with sharp opposition from Lord Auckland, British ambassador at The Hague, whose letters to Grenville on this subject betray a strong personal bias against the energetic Scot. Auckland declared that the proposed coercion of Russia must bring about a general war and shatter the Triple Alliance ; that the Dutch saw in the whole plan merely a spiteful desire to snatch a feather out of the cap of an old vixen (Catharine). The only material interests at stake were the possession of Oczakoff, and that port was valueless. On this subject he quoted the judgment of the Dutch admiral, Kingsbergen, who had served in the Russian fleet on that coast. Pitt having ordered him to procure a report from Kingsbergen, Auckland, on March 15, 1791, enclosed one, stating that Oczakoff did not command the navigable channel into the Liman (the estuary of the Bug and Dnieper) and was not a port. Kherson itself was of little use in comparison with Sevastopol, which must always be the chief menace to Turkey. Oczakoff (so Kingsbergen declared) was a possession burdensome to the Turks, and the cession of the land between the Bug and Dniester would not much benefit Russia politically or commercially.

We can now see that this last assertion was wide of the mark. The foundation of Odessa three years later showed the determination of Russia to colonise her new possession and to command the Black Sea. Oczakoff, in Russia's hands, of course declined in importance, because its place was taken by Odessa. None the less must we assert that Oczakoff was worth very much to the Moslems. The siege of it had always detained the Muscovites many months at the beginning of a war. Besides, the cession of all the land up to the Dniester implied the domination of that river by Russia, to the detriment of Polish commerce, of which that river was the southern outlet. In point of fact, the fortunes of Poland were as much at stake as those of Turkey, a matter which Auckland ignored.

Pitt might have been moved by the Dutch admiral's report had not at that very time an urgent demand reached him from the Prussian monarch. Frederick William had sent his favourite, Count Bischoffswerder, to Vienna to improve the relations with that Court. Leopold smiled upon him and uttered some gracious commonplaces, which induced that amateur diplomatist to believe that all risk of Austria siding with Russia in the pending

dispute between her and the allies was for ever averted. His report to Frederick William threw that monarch into a warlike fit; all unconscious of Hertzberg's secret intrigues, he resolved to compel Catharine to restore the Ozakoff district, and sent an urgent summons to Whitehall. Pitt and Leeds responded, as in honour bound; and after the consent of George III. was forthcoming, the Duke of Leeds sent off instructions for joint action with Prussia in coercing the Czarina. Gustavus III. was to be won over by the offer of 200,000*l.* or 300,000*l.* The hopeful forecast of Ewart evidently weighed with Pitt in this decision, for on that same day (March 27) he himself wrote to Auckland directing him to request the equipment of as large a fleet as possible in the Dutch harbours, it being certain that Catharine would give way before these superior forces.

As is well known, Pitt and his colleagues soon desisted from this threatening attitude. The reluctance of Parliament to follow them in these courses has generally been assigned as the chief, or sole, cause of this retreat. Certainly the Opposition made a formidable attack, especially on the secrecy in which Ministers veiled their actions. Nevertheless the Government held its own by ninety-seven votes to thirty-four in the Lords, and in the Commons by 228 to 135 (March 29). In face of these decisive majorities it is not easy to understand Pitt's change of front; but before we consider the diplomatic reasons for this volte face we may again refer to some unpublished letters between Pitt and Ewart. At the Cabinet meeting of March 31 the Duke of Richmond and Lords Grenville and Stafford opposed vigorous action against Russia, while Thurlow nagged at the proposal, and even Camden wavered. Pitt, Leeds, and Lord Chatham were therefore in the minority, and it was decided to send a special messenger to Berlin asking for a delay before the joint ultimatum was presented at St. Petersburg. This is what Pitt referred to in the following letter to Ewart, then at Buxton:

Downing Street, Wednesday, April 6, 1791, 5 p.m.

'Dear Sir,—I am extremely sorry to have an occasion to break in upon you in so short a time; but several circumstances have occurred which lead to a necessity of our sending another messenger with very material and new instructions to Berlin as speedily as possible, and as I think it very material to see you first, I cannot avoid begging you to come to town as early as you can make it convenient. I hope we need not detain you for more than a day or two. I cannot enter by letter into the particulars, but I wish to prepare you for learning that events have taken a turn here which seem to leave little or no chance of pushing our plan to its original extent, and that the best thing we shall have to —— (?) it is some

modification, which perhaps, however, may be so managed as to provide more fully than could have been expected for the general object.

'I am, &c.,

'W. Pitt.

'Joseph Ewart, Esq.'

Ewart broke in on his 'cure' at Buxton and had a long interview with Pitt about April 10–12, the purport of which he described in the following letter to his *locum tenens*, Francis Jackson, at Berlin:

London, April 14, 1791.

'. . . Upon my arrival I had a conversation of several hours with Mr. Pitt, who began by declaring to me that, so far from having altered his opinion in the least respecting the propriety of the decisive line of conduct he had adopted, the importance of the object, and the necessity of accomplishing it completely, appeared to him greater than ever. That he was convinced there never had existed a discussion in which the interests, both political and commercial, of this country were more committed, and that it was well worthy of every exertion. "But," continued he, "all my efforts to make a majority of the House of Commons understand the subject have been fruitless, and I know for certain that, tho' they may support me at present, I should not be able to carry the vote of credit. In short, Sir, you have seen that they can be embarked in a war from motives of passion, but they cannot be made to comprehend a case in which the most valuable interests of the country are at stake. What then, remains to be done? Certainly to risk my own situation, which my feelings and inclination would induce me to do, without any hesitation; but there are, unfortunately, circumstances in the present state of this country which make it certain that confusion and the worst of consequences might be expected, and it would be abandoning the King." After stating several facts in confirmation and repeating, even with the tears in his eyes, that it was the greatest mortification he had ever experienced, he said he was determined not to knock under but to keep up a good countenance. That the armaments should therefore continue to be made with vigour, and the fleet to be made ready for sailing, and that in the meantime he hoped means might be found to manage matters so as not to have the appearance of giving up the point, but modifying it so as to prevent any serious bad consequences from ensuing; tho' he repeated that he was well aware that the difference between any such plan would always be very great and extremely mortifying.

'I told him that, as he had not altered anything in his own view of the subject, and as he had explained himself to me with so much frankness and confidence, I was ready to contribute every assistance in my power, however disagreeable the consequences might be. He then communicated to me some drafts of instructions for you, stating in general terms the unexpected difficulties he had met with.

and proposing to bring forward the mediation of Denmark, either immediately or eventually, according to the answer returned by the Court of Petersburg or other circumstances that might occur, about which the Court of Denmark should be prepared.'

Ewart then informs Jackson that he advised Pitt to win over Leopold II. to the Triple Alliance, in which case he could still carry his point against Russia ; or else he might insist that all the land between the Bug and the Dniester should be left desert, or (worst of all) cede parts of it unconditionally to Catharine. He also urged the inclusion of Turkey and Poland in the alliance, and counselled a delay of two days before sending the new instructions to Berlin. He further describes an interview with the Duke of Leeds, whose firmness he greatly admired. We may here note that the outlook in Parliament was far from depressing. In the divisions of April 12 and 15 in the Commons, Pitt carried his point by 253 votes to 173 and 254 to 162, successively ; and it was alien to his sanguine nature to see obstacles looming large ahead. Probably the difficulties in the Cabinet were greater than those in Parliament. We must however remember several circumstances which are referred to very briefly or not at all in the ' Leeds Memoranda.'

Firstly, there arrived at Whitehall on March 27 a despatch from Lord Auckland at The Hague, stating that the Prussian Government had very recently discovered the unreality of Bischoffswerder's assurances about the good-will of the Viennese Court, which, on the contrary, was collecting magazines as if for war.

Secondly, on that same day news came from Francis Drake, British envoy at Copenhagen, that the all-powerful Danish Minister, Count Bernstorff, had good reasons for believing that the Czarina would accept some modifications of the Prusso-British terms, and that Denmark would willingly act as intermediary in discussions on this subject. Bernstorff significantly suggested that the Empress might accede to such a proposal as that Oczakoff should be razed and never rebuilt, the whole district up to the Dniester being left waste. Ewart's letter to Jackson proves that these suggestions made a great impression on Pitt. It is singular that the last of them coincided with that offered by Ewart himself. If we look forward a few days, we find that on April 20 Pitt drew up instructions for Ewart (who was about to return to Berlin), in the course of which he used these words respecting the Danish proposals. They furnish

' an opening not unfavourable for the adoption of some middle term, and this the rather as, since the delivery of those notes, some

circumstances have appeared which seem to render it almost certain that the suggestions there contained, though stated only as the sentiments of the Court of Denmark, have originated at Petersburg, and that Count Bernstorff had the authority of the Russian Government for mentioning them as likely to be adopted there.'

He added that Spain was offering her good offices for the settlement of the disputes in the East, and might consent to join in a guarantee of the Sultan's dominions. The Duke of Leeds differed sharply from Pitt as to the worth of the Danish offer, and declined to sign despatches drawn up on April 15 and 16 which replaced those sent off on March 27. Grenville therefore signed them, by the permission of the King. After five days of uncertainty the Duke resigned office, which at once was taken by Grenville.

Nevertheless, Pitt was resolved to put a bold front on affairs, and the instructions which he and Grenville drew up and signed on April 26 for Fawkener, a special envoy to St. Petersburg, were firm in tone. Fawkener was directed to concert a plan of action with Ewart, now again at Berlin, conformably to the desires of that Court, so far as was possible. Further, if the Russian Government declined to recede from its former demand for the unconditional cession by Turkey of all the land up to the Dniester, he was to leave St. Petersburg forthwith. As regards the modifications on that demand, Grenville continued as follows :

'The three principal cases of modification, short of the whole of your proposal, which may probably come in question, are as follows :

'(1) That the whole district in question, including the east bank of the Dniester, should be made neutral ground, to serve as a barrier of uninhabited country between the frontiers of the two Powers.

'(2) That the whole district as above described should be ceded to Russia, but with the restriction of her demolishing Oczakow and establishing no towns or fortresses within the district, and its remaining uninhabited.

'(3) That the cession should be confined to some other boundary short of the Dniester, so that the Empress should acquire the district so ceded, with the restriction only of demolishing the fort of Oczakow and of not building other fortresses within the district, or even without any restrictions on that subject.

'Of these arrangements his Majesty would prefer the first, and he would consider either that or the second as being, on the whole, sufficient for the accomplishment of the objects which he has in view under the present circumstances, and you are therefore authorised on either of these grounds to proceed without delay, jointly with Mr. Whitworth, to the signature of such a convention as is afterwards described, in concert with the Minister of Prussia and also

with the Minister of the States General, if he should be instructed to the same effect.

'If neither of the two first can be obtained, his Majesty would not object to your ultimately signing a convention as above on the ground of the third arrangement, supposing the King of Prussia to concur in it. But this is not to be done until you are informed how far the Emperor may, in consequence of the communications already made to him,* be disposed to support the ideas by the allies to the extent of either of the two first arrangements above mentioned; and, if this should be the case, you will not conclude on the third ground until you have had an opportunity of judging what effect the knowledge of the Emperor's disposition may have in inducing the Court of Petersburg to comply with his wishes and those of the allies. . . .'

These instructions did not involve a surrender to Catharine II., or anything derogatory to Prussia's interests. In fact, seeing that Pitt was now aware of the untrustworthiness of the Court of Berlin, it is remarkable that he still consented to risk a conflict with Russia. Certainly the change of front was far from being as sudden and humiliating as Sorel and other historians have represented. Frederick William showed no annoyance, but accorded a gracious reception to the special envoy, Fawkener, on May 11. Strange to say, the monarch decided in favour of the third of the alternatives cited above, which Pitt and Grenville thought the least desirable. As for Hertzberg, he welcomed the prospect of peace, doubtless because it kept open the door for the acquisition of Danzig and Thorn by a secret bargain with Russia. The chief regret manifested at Berlin arose from the refusal of the Court of London to send a fleet either to the Baltic or the Black Sea. Prussia could justly complain that this omission infringed the secret article of the Treaty of Berlin of August 13, 1788.

It is clear, then, that the allies might have won the game at St. Petersburg provided that Hertzberg played his part honourably and Leopold II. observed the Reichenbach terms. Neither of these conditions held good. Prussian policy wore a double front, petulant towards Pitt, cringing towards Catharine; and Leopold, though smiling graciously on the special envoy, the Earl of Elgin, allowed, or perhaps encouraged, his Chancellor to bully the Turks during the long negotiations at Sistova, and to send to the Czarina secret offers of help. Equally disconcerting, though probably less serious, was the opposition which Fawkener

* Lord Elgin proceeded on a mission to him while in Italy. For details see Vivenot, 'Kaiserpolitik Oesterreichs,' vol. i. pp. 126–37, 172–6.

encountered at St. Petersburg from Sir Robert Adair, an emissary of the Whig Opposition. It would extend this article too far to describe this singular 'mission,' which was probably suggested and prepared by Voronzoff at London, and was certainly utilised by Catharine with a skill and irony peculiarly her own. By emphasising the divisions of opinion in England, and by working on the desires of Hertzberg for Polish land, she succeeded in whittling down the demands of the allies, until Fawkener and Whitworth were fain to accept a convention which acknowledged the sovereignty of Catharine over all the land up to the Dniester, provided that she did not obstruct the navigation of that river (July 26). These terms found a place in the Russo-Turkish treaty signed at Jassy in January 1792.

Some disgust was expressed by Prussian politicians at the weakness of British diplomacy; and this was loudly echoed by the Whigs in England. But, considering the constant successes of the Russian arms on the Danube and in Georgia, no better terms could have been obtained save by a general war. Harris (now Baron Malmesbury) noted the characteristic of Catharine to adhere at all costs to her resolve, even though it was the offspring of caprice; and now, in the midst of triumph, she could scarcely be expected to restore the most substantial part of her conquests.

On the whole, it is more surprising that Pitt responded to the Prussian appeal which reached Whitehall on March 20 than that he assented to certain modifications in the demands of the allies on Russia. Before that day he had proofs of the untrustworthiness of Prussian policy; others came to hand on March 27; and the rejection of the Danish offer of mediation would have been an act unworthy a great peace Minister. The later collapse at St. Petersburg was due to the unsoundness of Prussian policy, to the duplicity of the Viennese Court, and to the factious opposition of the Whigs and their *représentant en mission*, Adair. At one point only did Pitt and Grenville show weakness—namely, in not sending a fleet to the Baltic. That act, though it would have aroused a furious clamour in England, would perhaps have lowered Catharine's tone. Certainly it would have appeased Prussia.

As it was, the Court of Berlin had some ground for asserting that British help never could be relied upon. The Dutch were still less serviceable. And thus the crisis of 1791 revealed the divergence of interests between the peace-loving maritime States and an expansive military State, which saw in every complication a means of rounding off its ragged eastern frontier. The alliance resulted largely from Pitt's fear of a French war of

revenge. It fell to pieces now that France aroused lust of conquest, not fear. There can be no doubt that Frederick William as well as the Hapsburgs looked on that democratic State as fair prey. The insults to Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette during, and after, the flight to Varennes furnished a specious cause for a union of the two German Powers with a view to intervention in France. Catharine and Gustavus skilfully furthered these projects; and thus in the summer and autumn of 1791 the orientation of Continental politics which set in strongly four years earlier, when Turkey attacked Russia, underwent a sharp reversal owing to the incoming of a new *motif*—the antagonism of royalism and democracy. To the schemes of a monarchist crusade Pitt gave not the slightest countenance; and the perception of Frederick William and his advisers that England would not support the hoped-for promenade to the Seine, still less the schemes already maturing against reformed Poland, furnished the last and weightiest reason for the collapse of an alliance which in the previous year had given laws to Europe.

Art. IV.—MOLIÈRE.

1. *Molière.* By Leon H. Vincent. Boston : Houghton, Mifflin and Co. 1902.
2. *The Life of Molière.* By Henry M. Trollope. London : Archibald Constable and Co. 1905.
3. *Molière.* By Sir Frank T. Marzials. London : George Bell and Co. 1906.
4. *Molière : a Biography.* By H. C. Chatfield-Taylor. New York : Duffield and Co. 1906.
5. *Molière et le Théâtre Espagnol.* Par E. Martinenche. Paris : Hachette et Cie. 1906.
6. *Molière and his Times.* By Karl Mantzius. London : Duckworth and Co. 1906.
7. *Molière.* Par Eugène Rigal. Paris : Hachette et Cie. 1908.
8. *Molière.* Par Georges Lafenestre. Paris : Hachette et Cie. 1909.

It is now nearly two centuries and a half since Molière died ; and yet the interest in him was never more widespread than it is to-day. Here are eight books about him published within the last seven years, one by a Dane, three by Frenchmen, two by Englishmen, and two by Americans. Only a score of years ago there was a monthly periodical, ' Le Moliériste,' devoted wholly to the study of his works. Indefatigable research in France has added much to the extent of our knowledge of the greatest comic dramatist of modern times. A host of minor discoveries have given us more certain information as to the facts of his life, and the circumstances of his work. It is now unlikely that any more intimate acquaintance with the details of his career will be possible to the next generation than we can ourselves now pretend to. We have the full outline of Molière's history and we have an abundant elucidation of his plays. We are now in a position to weigh his works, to estimate the man himself, and to come to a conclusion about him likely to be altered only a little in the next half-century.

We can now ask ourselves what manner of man he was. We can put him in his place as a representative of his race and of his time. We can seek to estimate the final value of his comedies and to set forth their influence in the later developement of the drama. In so doing we can find profit in these more recent studies, and more particularly in the most recent elaborate

critical biography in two volumes by M. Eugène Rigal, a scholar who is highly esteemed by all students of the history of French dramatic literature.

In an early page of his biography of Schiller Carlyle asserts that 'it would be interesting to discover by what gifts and by 'what employment of them he reached the eminence on which 'we now see him; to follow the steps of his intellectual and 'moral culture; to gather from his life and works some picture 'of himself.' The Scotch critic believes that 'it would at once 'instruct and gratify us if we could understand him thoroughly, 'could transport ourselves into his circumstances, outward and 'inward, could see as he saw and feel as he felt.' And the biographer points out the difficulties of his task. 'Such men as 'he are misunderstood by their daily companions, much more 'by the distant observer, who gleans his information from scanty 'records.' And finally Carlyle calls attention to the added difficulty due to the haze of a foreign language, of foreign manners, and modes of thinking strange to us, a haze, which 'confuses and obscures the light, often magnifying what is 'trivial, softening what is rude, and sometimes hiding or 'distorting what is beautiful.'

If Carlyle was conscious of these disadvantages, when he wrote only a scant half-century after Schiller's death, how much larger must they loom before any one who undertakes to deal with Molière almost three centuries after his birth? And yet there is fascination in the resolute grapple with difficulty, in the effort to see the man as he really was, to seize his character as it reveals itself to us, and to estimate his art. The task is irresistibly alluring even if the result cannot be completely satisfactory. Moreover, any attempt to paint the portrait of the artist who has left us a gallery of pictures of the society in which he moved calls for the exercise of the most delicate criticism, of that discrimination, indeed, which 'dwells less on 'the final balance of good and evil than on the first innate con-'ditions of temperament,' as Lord Morley has defined it, and which considers carefully 'the fixed limitations of opportunity 'and the complex interplay of the two.'

In psychologic analysis of this exquisite precision no one has ever surpassed Sainte-Beuve; and he took occasion more than once to declare his method. When he sat himself down before an author to discover the secret of character and to penetrate to the soul of his subject, he was in the habit of drawing up an interrogatory. He asked a series of questions as to the writer's race, his time, his family, his father and mother, his first group of friends and his later associates—since a man

is ever known by the company he keeps. Then the critic pushed the inquiry further and sought to discover what were the circumstances of the author's career. How about his health? Was he rich or poor? What was his attitude toward money? How did he live? What were his relations with women? What was his dominating passion? What were his religious views, and what was his philosophy? And it was only when he had held this inquest that Sainte-Beuve felt himself fully prepared to begin his criticism.

Even though the scrutiny may not have been pushed to its uttermost limits the answers to most of the questions which Sainte-Beuve would have asked about Molière will be found in the pages of his biography. Molière was born in Paris; his family was well-to-do; he saw the opening glories of the reign of Louis XIV.; his health was never good; he made money and he spent it freely, living largely and having an open hand; he had a gift for friendship and he was fortunate in his friends; he was unhappily married; he died when he was only fifty-one, and when he may not yet have revealed his full power. These are the fundamental facts which must serve to elucidate his character; and about them there can be no dispute. But there are not a few other aspects of the man, other characteristic facts which call for further consideration—his attitude toward religion, for one, and for another, his position as a representative of his race and of his time.

Molière's philosophy is closely akin to that of Rabelais and Montaigne; and, although not so relaxed, it is not really remote from that of La Fontaine. It is easy-going and tolerant; it does not expect too much from mankind; yet it makes the best of humanity as this happens to be. Here it parts company from the philosophy of Pascal and of Bossuet, and even of Racine, which is severe, austere and narrow, almost as rigorous for themselves as for others. Molière has not a little of the richness of Rabelais' humour, though he lacks the earlier writer's overflowing vitality; and beneath the humour of both there is deep observation and ripe reflection. They did their own thinking in their own fashion; and they were bold enough in reasoning, even if they felt it needful to be cautious in expression. Molière has also his full share of the sceptical optimism which characterises Montaigne, who also loved sincerity and abominated falsity and treachery.

Considered by itself the philosophy of Molière is like his morality and his religion; it is that of a man of the world. It is not vague or dreamy or mystic; it is practical, even if it has a

flavour of epicureanism rather than of stoicism. It is not nourished on abstractions; it clings to the concrete facts, interpreting them, no doubt, but also controlled by them. It is not unlike the eminently uninspired philosophy of Franklin, serviceable enough for everyday use, but not sustaining in the darker crises of existence. It leads Molière to take human nature as he finds it, not expecting too much and not unduly disappointed when men and women do not come up even to his modest expectations. It does not prevent his warning his fellows of the danger of selfishness and of hypocrisy; neither does it stimulate him with high hope that his caution will be heeded by many of those who hear him. It never awakens him to wrath against mankind at large and to harsh contempt for the human race as a whole. It helps him to laugh out loud rather than to weep or to scold. It is kindly and not uncharitable. It prevents him from idealising humanity, and it helps him to keep his grip on reality, on things as they are.

Molière had little aptitude for metaphysical speculation. His philosophy is not spiritualised; rather is it like his religion, distinctly terrestrial. Things celestial did not easily attract him; and the circle of his interests was contained in this world. To say this is to say that he was not religious by temperament, and that his morality was but little touched with emotion. Here again he recalls Montaigne, whose influence on him is visible at every stage of his intellectual developement. Both of them accept the church as they chance to find it, taking it as a matter of government, and little concerned with its mysteries. There is no hypocrisy in their conforming to its minimum requirement; nor is there in this any sacrifice of conviction since a deeply rooted religious conviction was as conspicuously lacking in the one as in the other.

Neither of them cared to take thought about the matter, not holding any doctrine or dogma important enough to quarrel about or even to reward argument. When religious disputes ran high, Montaigne and Molière passed by on the other side, not tempted even to look on at the faction fight. So long as a man kept peace with the church and did what it demanded, he was free to have his own opinions, although he had better keep these to himself. Perhaps Molière did not even take the trouble to have opinions of his own about religion, although we may doubt whether he would have actually approved the dogma of the fall of man, any more than Montaigne really believed in any doctrine of total depravity. He took his religion not exactly on faith but by tradition. He received it as a convention of society. Passionate as he might be, he was not sentimental

and not emotional; and he could work his own code of morality and expound his vision of life without bothering his head any more about its spirituality than about its materiality. In other words his religion was not exactly personal; it was social.

There is a far closer resemblance between Molière and those conforming sceptics, Rabelais and Montaigne, than there is between him and the profoundly religious Pascal, whose 'Provincial Letters' undoubtedly broadened the scope of Molière's larger comedies. But Molière has his point of contact with Pascal in that they both submit themselves to the government of pure reason, whereas religion demands an element of poetry, if that word may serve to designate something which it is not easy to define. This poetic element of religion was lacking in Pascal, humble as was his piety. Perhaps we can see more clearly into Molière when we recall what Sainte-Beuve has written about Pascal, who had 'a mind logical, geometric, anxious as to causes, fine, clear, eloquent,' and who therefore 'represents the perfection of human understanding in what this understanding has that is most definite, most distinct, most detached in its relation to the universe.' Molière is not Pascal, of course; in many ways he is the diametric opposite of Pascal; yet not a little of this characterisation of Pascal is applicable also to Molière, whose mind was also logical, lucid, and eloquent and whose understanding was definite and distinct.

Danger besets every attempt to pack a composite race into any single formula; and yet manifest and manifold exceptions may not invalidate a general definition, if only that has been guardedly drawn up. The inhabitants of different countries differ; and it is not impossible, even if it is not easy, to indicate the deeper lines of cleavage between two nationalities. The French are like the Greeks of old in their regard for reason and in their reliance on intelligence as though it was sufficient for all things. They are like the Latins, whose traditions they have inherited, in their respect for order and for proportion, even at the expense of an artificial sharpness of outline, and even at the cost of a certain hardness which is evident enough in spite of their attitude of sympathetic comprehension. They are like the Celts, who contributed so large an element to their population, in their social attributes, in their irresistible desire to stand well with their fellows, in their facility of speech, in their ease and their gaiety, in their keen sense of the ridiculous and their light-hearted mockery.

They are unlike the Germans in that they lack the aptitude for philosophical speculation, preferring what is clear and

precise to what is obscurely suggestive; they have also less lyric gift than the Germans, less dreamy sentiment. And they are also free from the excessive individualism of the English-speaking race, with its impatience of authority and its insistent demand for freedom. Perhaps this is because they have less essential energy, which characterizes the Anglo-Saxon stock and which often expresses itself in imagination. And as they do not possess this, they do not greatly value it, preferring the qualities they have in its stead. As Nisard put it admirably, in France 'reason, which is the common bond of all men, is more 'highly esteemed than imagination, which disperses them and 'isolates them.' This is why the French are superior to all other modern races in their mastery of prose, which is the instrument of reason and of social intercourse. This is why they are less likely to excel in the loftier regions of poetry, which demands rather the isolating imagination.

Here also we can find the explanation why the French have surpassed all other peoples in comedy, which is the picture of society and which must be a product of the intelligence; while their tragedy, perhaps the most characteristic department of all their literature, is not universally acceptable, and is indeed completely satisfactory only to the French themselves. 'Such 'is this race,' said one of the acutest of French critics, Taine, who had also a wide outlook over the other nations, 'such is 'this race, the most Attic of the moderns, less poetic than the 'ancient, but as keen, with a mind exquisite rather than great, 'endowed rather with taste than with genius, sensual but with-'out grossness or excessive ardour, not moral but sociable and 'gentle, not reflective but capable of grasping ideas, and all 'ideas, even the highest, in spite of their mockery and their 'gaiety.'

When Taine wrote this he had in mind La Fontaine, whom he put forward as the embodiment of racial characteristics. But La Fontaine seems a little too narrow in his vision and a little too restricted in his productivity to be received as an acceptable representative in literature of the national type. Molière is a larger figure and fitter for this pre-eminence. We find in him the characteristics of the stock more boldly displayed. He stands forward as the chief figure in all French literature, not only because of his ample genius, which causes his work to transcend the boundaries of a single language and to attain the universal, but because in him better than in any other French author do we find the permanent and essential qualities of the French race summed up and condensed once for all.

As La Fontaine is too limited in his scope to withstand com-

parison with Molière, so Rabelais is too mediæval and Montaigne too sceptical in his curiosity. Pascal is too religious, and Voltaire is too cynical and disintegrating. Victor Hugo is too Teutonic and too individual; and Balzac is too confused and too metallic. Better than any of them does Molière express the complexity of the national type. In his works we cannot help discovering all the best qualities of the French: the play of wit, the sense of humour, the keen intelligence, the reasoning faculty, the subtle insight into character, and the social instinct. And whatever we may fail to find in his writings, we are not likely to be able to perceive often in the other authors of his language. Molière is the foremost figure of all French literature, as Dante and Cervantes and Shakspere are the chiefs in their several tongues.

'Order and clearness, logic and precision, severity of composi-'tion and finish of style,' these, so Brunetière declares, were ever the ideals of French writers; and never were these ideals more deliberately sought and more often attained than during the classical period, which almost coincides with the life of Louis XIV. We are wont to look upon Boileau as the exponent of the classical theories; but when he codified the rules of literary art he was only setting in array the scattered precepts already accepted in the practice of his elder contemporaries. He did not descend from the mountain with a new revelation, carrying the tables of the law in his hand.

The classical theory, as Boileau maintained it, was partly the result of the French acceptance of the principles worked out by the Italian critics of the Renaissance, who deduced from Aristotle the doctrine of the three unities and the separation of the comic and the tragic. But it was modified by the social instinct of the French themselves and by their desire for simplicity of construction and for clarity of treatment. It imposed on all writers the duty of thinking about their readers as well as about themselves, and of so presenting what they had to say that it might be most readily received. They were expected to shun eccentricity, exaggeration, and awkwardness, and to avoid overt individuality. They were to keep to the middle of the road, not straying from the beaten path. They were expected to appeal, if not to the average man, at least to the general reader, who might be supposed to have derived from his general reading a common fund of knowledge and a common stock of ideas. This led them to generalise, to seek the typical, and to deal with their theme broadly and boldly in its larger aspects, not delaying long over individual peculiarities.

Molière is the chief figure of all French literature and especially of this classical period; he holds this position not only because he happened to live under Louis XIV. and because he painted the society of that period, not only because he was the most affluent genius of the era, but also because he accepted the classical theory and conformed his practice to it and found himself at ease within it. Corneille yielded to it a little unwillingly and kept chafing against its bonds; and Racine, whose range is far narrower, is really a disciple of Molière, artfully applying to tragedy the method which Molière had exemplified in comedy. Racine is the result of the rigid application of the French classical dogmas, and he is therefore most fully appreciated by his own countrymen. He lacks breadth of appeal; and he has never won wide acceptance outside of France. Corneille finds more admirers in other countries, partly because he is not really in sympathy with the fundamental principles of the classicists. He is a Norman, with an almost Teutonic individualism; and he delights in the stark assertion of the human will, which stiffens his drama, no doubt, but which appears sometimes to be almost anarchistic when contrasted with the uniform acceptance of the social bond, as we see this in Racine and in Molière.

It is the better aspects of the classical period that Molière represents, not its excesses or its weaknesses. He avoids the stately artificiality which is the besetting sin of the period and which disappoints us in the architecture of Versailles, for example; and he never relaxes into the empty grandiloquence discoverable occasionally even in Corneille. He is natural always; he neither soars too high nor sinks too low; he keeps his audience in mind, and he manages to express himself fully while he is delighting them. The drama must be the most social of the arts, not to say the most democratic. It has been called 'a function of the crowd'; and it is necessarily the art which must make the broadest appeal to the people as a whole. Perhaps this is the reason that the doctrine of the theorists of classicism was most directly applied to the drama. The Abbé d'Aubignac had published his treatise on dramatic art a year before Molière's return to Paris; and while Molière's practical sense as a playwright prevented his blind adhesion to the rules as the theorists proclaimed them, and while he asserted again and again that the chief rule of all was to give pleasure—an assertion made also more than once by both Corneille and Racine—he never set himself in opposition to the theorists, and indeed defended himself against the charge that he had violated these 'rules.' Even if he did not care about them very much, he conformed

to them, except in 'Don Juan,' where his Spanish story required a departure from the unity of place.

At bottom, Molière, like Shakspere, cared little for any dramatic theories. Those which he took occasion to express are the result of his own methods. His methods conditioned his theories, and his theories did not control his methods. As a result, his theories and his methods were in accord; and he is never caught in contradiction with himself—as Zola is, for example, declaiming in favour of naturalism, while working, if not romantically, at least epically. As it happened by good fortune, the principles of dramatic art proclaimed by the critics of his own time suited Molière's genius, and perhaps even aided its full expansion. His composition is lucid, logical, serried; and it may be that we do not at first perceive his richness in ideas, because they are presented so clearly and so unpretentiously. His plays are swift in movement and sharp in outline. There is never any hesitancy or confusion. He knows in advance what he is going to do; and he does it with the unerring certainty of a mathematical demonstration.

He accepts the unity of action, the unity of place, and the unity of time; he gives us a simple story, acted out in one place and within twenty-four hours; and he adds to these three the unity of character. Perhaps it ought to be said rather that the unity of character is the direct result of the unity of time, since a human being cannot greatly change within the space of a single day. He presents his chief characters with logical completeness, making them coherent and self-explanatory. They are never inconsistent or self-contradictory. We are never left in doubt as to the aim and as to the motives of Alceste, as we may be as to those of Hamlet. His psychology, deep as it is and searching, is also simple. Although all his great characters are individual as well as typical, he tends toward the type—which was in accord with the theory of the classicists. Harpagon is a recognizable human being, of course, but he is also the embodiment of avarice itself; and here is where Harpagon differs from Grandet, who is not at all typical but absolutely individual.

The gap that yawns between classicism and realism is most evident when we compare Balzac's concrete presentation of his characters with the abstract methods of Molière: Balzac relates his figures to their backgrounds; Molière generalizes and avoids the specific. His persons in his plays are known to us only as they appear in these plays. There are few details of contemporary life to be gleaned in Molière, where there is a rich harvest in Balzac—details about trade and money, about educa-

tion and heredity. There are in Molière very few indications even of the social condition of the characters. Who is Alceste, for example, and what is his position in society? These things we may infer, if we choose, but we are not specifically informed by the dramatist. Who is Tartuffe, and where did he come from? What have been his earlier adventures? Orgon has only a label for a name, although his mother is Madame Pernelle. In all Molière's comedies M. Jourdain is the only leading character who has really a name. And this is quite in accord with the classical theory, which approved of an abstract presentation and which shunned the concrete as too personal and not sufficiently generalized. Yet his willing acceptance of this principle of the classicists does not loosen Molière's grip of reality. He may choose to present his characters in a different fashion, but they do not yield to Balzac's in their actuality, in their vitality.

There may be a hint of hardness now and then in Molière, for his intellect controlled his emotions; but there is no bitterness, no trace of the acerbity we cannot help finding in Beaumarchais. Molière saw only the glorious beginning of the reign of a beloved king, whereas Beaumarchais beheld the exposed shame of a degraded and degrading monarchy tottering to its fall. We do not catch in Molière's comedies that note of revolt which rings through the satiric plays of Beaumarchais; nor is there any exhibition by Molière of the sophistry of Rousseau or the cynicism of Diderot. He had no hatreds, except that he desperately despised pretenders of all sorts. He was too gentle and too kindly for any detestation of individuals. He was not vindictive, even toward Racine, who had played him a mean trick. He was generous in temper as well as liberal with money. Grimarest derived from Baron more than one anecdote setting forth Molière's open-handedness and the delicacy of his charity.

Even if a little disenchanted, Molière had no grudge against humanity. He was companionable, and he joyed in gathering his friends about him. Boileau and La Fontaine were habitual guests of the country house he had at Auteuil in the later years of his life. In their society he found relief from his abiding melancholy—that melancholy which often accompanies the broadest humour. Aristophanes may have been without it, to his loss; but Cervantes had it for a certainty despite his manly fortitude; and Swift was possessed by it. They had all of them command over the springs of laughter; they could all be gay with a hearty expansion and with irresistible comic force; but none the less they had their days of depression. Life did not

always wear its most amusing aspects in Molière's eyes. The deeper he saw into the meanness of mankind, into its pettiness and its selfishness, the harder it must have been for him to keep always to the tone of comedy. But he never let any vision of the darker vices of humanity obscure his outlook on life. He retained his optimism to the end ; and he never lost his belief in nature.

It is in this trust in nature, when nature is controlled by reason, that we can find the clue to Molière's philosophy. It is this regard for what is natural which urges him on to expose pretension and affectation and hypocrisy. It explains his attack on the *précieuses*, on the physicians, and on the bigots. Above all else he cherishes sincerity and simplicity—especially sincerity in men and simplicity in women. It is his regard for nature again which leads him to be on the side of the young lovers in his plays when their natural mating is opposed by a parental selfishness which is unnatural in his eyes. He seems to hold that every one of us has a natural right to his or her share of happiness and even of pleasure, and that this natural right is limited only by the rights of others.

His morality is not religious but social. He was a self-controlled man, as his whole life proves ; and he had neither time nor health for dissipation. But there was nothing ascetic in his sobriety. He had no longing for renunciation or for self-sacrifice for its own sake : these were Christian virtues that he did not understand or appreciate. Probably these appeared to him out of nature and therefore not to be cultivated. It is a very mundane morality, this of Molière's ; and it has its obvious inadequacy. Yet it served his purpose. At bottom, he had himself a character of transparent simplicity and of unalterable sincerity. He was in no way self-conscious, self-centred, or egotistic.

It may be because his morality is rather earthy than ethereal that he has found little favour with women. He is too direct, too keen-eyed, and too plain-spoken to please them greatly. He appears to them lacking in passion and in poetry. Certainly he fails to idealise them, and they resent this, finding his comedies without that which delights them and flatters them in Shakspere's plays. Shakspere has heroines in plenty, even if he has few heroes ; Molière has not even heroes. He writes for men who know life and who want to know it better, and not for women who prefer to ignore it. His plays are meant for men who relish reality, and not for women, who are delighted rather with romance. He appeals to the manly love of veracity, even if it

is harsh or brutal, not to the womanly shrinking from revelation of the truth, even if they cannot deny it.

It is a fact also that women do not greatly care for any of the bolder humorists, not even for Shakspere when he is at his richest and broadest, as in Falstaff, for instance. They draw back from the hearty animality of it, the healthy grossness, which is a necessary element of large genius and which we can discover in Luther and Franklin and Lincoln, as well as in Shakspere and Molière. Women like to shut their eyes to this lower aspect of our common humanity, and they see no reason why attention should be called to it. They really prefer the unhealthy and feeble idealism of Shelley and of Poe, which seeks to soar above the soil and which only too often falls into the mire. Even when humour is not free and penetrating, women cannot help preferring a more pathetic treatment of life. They would rather weep than laugh. And there are no tears in Molière, but only the true comedy of mankind, with the mirth that clears the air and helps us to live our lives in this world. His is an antiseptic humour. As Goethe said, 'Molière is a 'genuine man; there is nothing distorted about him. He 'chastened men by drawing them just as they are.'

Molière was only fifty-one when he died, and all except two of his thirty plays had been written in the final fourteen years of his life. From 1659 to 1673 there was no single year in which he did not produce at least one play, and there were four years in which he brought out three pieces within the twelvemonth. In all but one of these plays he acted himself, and he also directed the affairs of the company. He had need to be both fertile and facile in these later years, when the demands on him were incessant and imperative. Fortunately for him he had served a long apprenticeship in the provinces, solving the mysteries of the art of play-making and amassing a store of observations of human nature. When at last he was able to return to the capital, his genius ripened swiftly. The dramatists have usually begun to produce plays when they were in the first flush of youth, in sharp contrast with the novelists, who have often flowered late in life. Molière, however, was forty-two when he wrote 'Tartuffe,' forty-three when he followed it with 'Don Juan,' forty-four when he brought forth the 'Misanthrope,' and fifty when he made fun of the 'Femmes Savantes.' Perhaps a part of the deeper insight and the wider vision of these masterpieces of comedy is due to the relative maturity of their author when he composed them.

As we consider the strict succession of his comedies we can trace the steady growth of his power as a dramatist. In the very

earliest of his plays we meet with his characteristic gaiety, animation, and swiftness. He is already a master of the craft of play-making; he has achieved constructive skill and he has attained to unerring certainty of execution. But his humour then is not so rich as it revealed itself in the later plays; it is more or less external in these earlier pieces, arising more from deliberate ingenuity of artificial situation than from piercing observation of life and character. Indeed, in the 'Etourdi,' for example, our interest is aroused mainly by the situation and scarcely at all by the characters, who are little more than profile figures, created to carry out the plot.

Then as he slowly gains confidence in himself, and as he steadily wins authority with the public, he puts more and more human nature into his comedies, and he relies less and less on the easier and more mechanical effects of equivoke and surprise. Yet he advances very cautiously indeed, desirous of carrying his audiences along with him and unwilling ever to disconcert them by too rapid a stride forward. The 'Ecole des Femmes' is already a comedy of manners, but it is still a comedy of intrigue; it has a thesis and it contains a moral, but its form is that of the familiar comedy-of-masks. Not until he produced 'Tartuffe' did he emancipate himself completely from this convenient Italian form, with its single scene in the open square, where anybody may meet anybody else as the story shall require. When he composed 'Tartuffe' he perfected a new formula of his own, fit for all the higher efforts of his comic genius, used by him again in the 'Misanthrope' and in the 'Femmes Savantes,' and now accepted by every writer of comedy in every modern language.

Yet, even after he had gone forward to high comedy, he never shrank from going back to low comedy, for he was master of both, and he needed both to express himself completely. Even in the last year or two of his life, in the 'Fourberies de Scapin,' he utilised again the framework of the comedy-of-masks, which he knew to be widely and abidingly popular with the Parisian playgoers. The later plays on this Italian model are only superficially like the earlier, as we can see plainly when we compare the 'Fourberies de Scapin' with the 'Etourdi,' a comparison which easily establishes Molière's constant progress as a comic playwright. In both pieces the situations are brisk, lively and ingenious; but the earlier play is dependent solely on these situations, while the later play is carried by its characters, who are far more solidly and amply conceived than those that figure in its more primitive predecessor. Here once more there is a Shaksperian parallel; the English dramatist willingly

descended to farce again when he put together 'The Merry Wives 'of Windsor,' after he had risen to the more delicate comedy of the 'Merchant of Venice.' And the 'Merry Wives,' it may be noted also, farce as it must be called, is peopled with characters recognisably human and far more real than those in 'Love's 'Labour's Lost,' wherein the resolution to be clever is quite as obvious as in the 'Etourdi,' and the humour quite as external.

Although Molière, in more than half of his comic plays, chose to avail himself of the formula of the comedy-of-masks, assured of its attractiveness to the public and satisfied to use it as a means of calling forth hearty laughter, he was in fact remarkably prolific in the invention of new dramatic forms. In 'Tartuffe' and the 'Femmes Savantes' he has left us the model of high comedy. In the 'Fâcheux' he contrived the first 'protean 'play,' in which an actor can appear in several parts in swift succession. In the 'Critique de l'Ecole des Femmes' he ventured on a literary criticism in dialogue, a daring feat never before attempted. In the 'Impromptu de Versailles' he took the audience behind the curtain and made a play out of a rehearsal, anticipating Buckingham and Sheridan. In the 'Mariage 'Forcé' he hit on the fit method for making a comedy-ballet. In 'Psyché' he anticipated grand opera with all its sustaining spectacular effects. In the 'Misanthrope' and the 'Avare' he created the comedy of character, which was to have a long life in the French theatre. And in a host of other pieces he has left us interesting variants of the comedy of intrigue and of the comedy of manners.

That he was able to do these things was largely due to the fact that he was not only a dramatic author but also a theatrical manager. The demands of the manager must always condition the work of the author. However Molière might aspire as a poet, he rarely allowed his ambition as an author to interfere with his duty to the company he directed. He kept his finger on the pulse of the public, and when it failed to approve what he had given it, he never hesitated to retrace his steps and to give it what he knew by experience it was certain to approve. If the play-goers of Paris would not accept a heroic comedy like 'Don 'Garcie,' with him in the heroic part, he never again repeated the attempt. If the 'Misanthrope,' the play of his predilection, proved to be too bare of story to win wide popularity, he took the warning to heart and sustained the 'Femmes Savantes' by a plot more likely to arrest attention and to win sympathy.

Like every other great dramatic poet, he composed his plays not for the readers of posterity but for the audiences of his own

time. He intended them, not for perusal but for performance by actors, in a theatre and before an audience, and therefore he fitted his characters to the actors who were going to impersonate them, he adjusted his plots to the playhouse wherein they were to be exhibited, and he kept in mind always the preferences and the prejudices of the spectators before whom his plays were to be acted, whether at court or in the capital.

Probably he did not do these things any more consciously than Shakspere, but unfortunately we know far less about the company of the Globe in London than we know about the company at the Palais Royal in Paris. If Hamlet, who is 'the glass of fashion and the mould of form,' is also 'fat and 'scant of breath,' we may surmise that this is only because Burbage was beginning to put on flesh. If Orgon in the 'Malade 'Imaginaire' has a cough, we know that this was because Molière wrote the part for himself, after his own cough had become troublesome. If Tartuffe is plump and well-favoured, this may be partly because the character was composed for Du Croisy. If La Flèche in the 'Avare' limps we can discover the reason in the fact that his part was written for Molière's brother-in-law, Béjart, who was lame. If the Toinette of the 'Malade Imaginaire' and the Nicole of the 'Bourgeois Gentilhomme' have less authority than the Dorine of 'Tartuffe,' and a more infectious gaiety, although the three characters are otherwise very much alike, we can explain this easily enough when we remember that Dorine was written for Madeleine Béjart, who had played many a leading part in tragedy, whereby she had gained breadth and weight, and that her successor, Mademoiselle Beauval, for whom Nicole and Toinette were composed, was a younger woman of less experience but with a spontaneous laugh and the gift of bubbling gaiety.

We can gauge the range of Molière's own art as an actor when we recall that he was unfailingly successful in the chief comic characters of a large majority of his own plays. He did not appear as Tartuffe or as Don Juan, but he did impersonate Alceste, Orgon and Argan, Mascarille, Sganarelle and Scapin. We can also form a clear idea of the very remarkable ability of his wife as an actress when we call the roll of the important parts with which she was entrusted and in which she was completely successful, according to all contemporary criticism. She had youth and charm, even if not acknowledged beauty; but these qualities alone would not equip her for the performance of characters as various and as difficult in their several degrees as the two Angéliques in 'Georges Dandin' and the 'Malade 'Imaginaire,' as Elmire and Célimene and Henriette. We can be sure that her husband would never have written these parts

for her if he had not seen in her a capacity to play them brilliantly.

It is true, of course, that the author was his own stage-manager and that he insisted on educating all the company to speak his lines and to personate his characters exactly as he intended. It is probable that he did not spare himself in the trouble he took in the training of his wife, in explaining his desires and in suggesting readings and gestures and business. But she must have had the native gift or all this would have availed little. Mrs. Siddons is known to have profited by many an invaluable suggestion from her able and scholarly brother, John Philip Kemble ; and Rachel did her best only after she had had the benefit of Samson's advice. But without these extraneous aids Mrs. Siddons and Rachel would have won to the front in their profession, and so would Armande Béjart, even though she had the path made smooth before her by the genius of her husband.

In certain of Molière's earliest pieces the performers are so closely identified with the parts they impersonated that the characters are called by the actual names or stage-names of the actors themselves—Gros-Réné in the ' Dépit Amoureux ' and Jodelet, La Grange and Du Croisy in the ' Précieuses Ridicules.' And in this last play the two pretentious young women who have come up from the provinces are known only as Madelon and Cathos. Brunetière thinks that these names are significant in themselves, as Madame de Rambouillet was called Catherine and Mademoiselle de Scudéry, Madeleine. But this ingenious suggestion loses most of its point when we remind ourselves that the two girls were played by Madeleine Béjart and Catherine de Brie.

It has been pointed out by more than one commentator that, although Molière presents many fathers, he scarcely ever introduces a mother, and that he gives us no single portrayal of maternal love, in spite of the unusual strength in France of the bond between mother and child. We can account for this omission by recalling the fact that Molière's own mother had died when he was very young, and that he is not inclined to put into his plays a sentiment he had not witnessed at first hand. This explanation may be valid ; but another will present itself to any one who considers closely the absolute certainty with which the dramatist always adjusts his comedies to the company for which they were composed. Molière's plays never contain any character for whom there was not a fit performer already attached to the Palais Royal ; and he never burdened the treasury of the theatre with the cost of a special engagement. Now, there was no ' old woman ' in the company, and the

occasional elderly female whom Molière brings on the stage is always so vigorously drawn that she can be played by a man. Madame Pernelle, Madame Jourdain and Philaminte were each of them originally impersonated by a male actor, capable enough of depicting the humorous peculiarities of these characters, but probably not competent to suggest the tenderer sentiment of motherhood.

Molière's comedies are not more consistently fitted to his own comedians than they are to the actual stage of the theatre for which they were composed. Even the more or less spectacular comedy-ballet, prepared for the king and the court, were most of them so constructed that they could be brought out at the Palais Royal with little loss of effect. The French comedians shared this theatre with the Italian comedians, and quite possibly the two companies had a common stock of scenery. Certainly Molière is constantly employing the traditional set of Italian comic drama, inherited, it may be, from the Latins, or else derived from the permanent scenery that Palladio built upon the stage in his theatre at Vicenza. This open square, with its separate houses for the several characters and with its streets branching off so that the persons of the piece might play hide and seek on occasion, was a most convenient set for the action of a comedy of intrigue. It had the further advantage that it enabled the playwright to conform to the unity of place by massing together in a single spot the residences of all the characters. We find this set in more than a third of Molière's pieces.

In another third of his plays, including all the larger and more elevated comedies, the scene is an interior which serves for all the acts. In only two or three comedies does Molière allow himself to violate the unity of place; and there are changes of scene only in the more or less spectacular pieces—'Don Juan' and 'Psyché.' We need to bear in mind always that in Molière's theatre, as in Shakspere's, spectators were permitted to have seats on the stage itself, well down in front. At the Globe in London these playgoers had to provide themselves with stools, which they procured behind the arras before they came forward, whereas at the Palais Royal they were placed on benches that ran back at right angles to the line of the curtain. The presence of these spectators on the stage, hidden from the audience when the curtain fell, but able to see whatever went on behind it, deprived Molière of the modern playwriter's privilege of ending the act with a tableau. At the Palais Royal, as at the Globe, all the characters had to make their exits before the end of the

act. Indeed, this emptying of the stage was the conventional signal that the act was over.

With a part of the audience sitting in full view and with the important episodes always acted well forward and between these rows of spectators, the dramatist could not aim at the pictorial effects which the more modern playwright has at his command in our latter-day theatres. As the stage was only dimly lighted, the acting had to take place remote from the scenery, and the dramatist could not relate his characters to their background. He could make only occasional and limited use of properties or of furniture. His characters had to stand, or at least he provided seats for them only when this is absolutely demanded by the action, as in the interview between Elmire and Tartuffe, when she sits by the side of the table under which Orgon has concealed himself.

This extreme simplicity of presentation is not imposed on the modern stage, free of all spectators and seen through the picture-frame of the proscenium. But it had its advantages as well as its disadvantages. For one thing, it focussed interest on the action itself and on the characters who were taking part in the action. And, for another, it has bestowed on the play itself a transportability which few modern pieces possess, since they require a more elaborate scenic adornment. A comedy of Molière's could be acted anywhere and anywhen, almost without preparation. This accounts for the ease with which he was able to present his plays in private houses. It explains also why his comedies are now performed at the Théâtre Français without alteration, omission or transposition—without any of the hacking and mangling which is absolutely imperative when one of Shakspere's plays is presented in a modern playhouse. It cannot be said too emphatically or too often that the theatre for which Shakspere wrote was semi-medieval, whereas the theatre for which Molière wrote was essentially modern, even if it did not contain all the latest improvements.

Shakspere's theatre was unroofed, it was illuminated only by daylight, and its stage had no scenery. Molière's theatre was roofed, lighted, and furnished with scenery. This is why Shakspere is a most unfortunate model for all modern poets, whose dramas are intended for performance in the playhouses of to-day. Coming after the theatre had given up the semi-medieval methods which still obtained when Corneille wrote his earlier plays, and after it had taken on conditions not radically different from those which we find in the playhouse of the twentieth century, Molière was fortunately able to anticipate the dramatic form still acceptable after nearly three hundred

years. Indeed, this dramatic form, devised by Molière and exemplified in 'Tartuffe,' is almost identical with that employed by Ibsen, a later master of dramaturgy, in the 'Pillars of 'Society' and in the 'Doll's House.'

Molière did not study his actors and his theatre more persistently than he studied his audiences. He knew them intimately, and he was one of them, a Parisian by birth and breeding; their point of view was his also; and he had inherited the most of their prejudices and preferences. He knew that they came to the Palais Royal for laughter, first of all; and he rarely disappointed them of this. He was ever ready to give them that they were seeking, although he often put before them stronger meat than they had asked for. Even when he turned in time to themes not comic in themselves, he was careful to present these from the most humorous standpoint and to lighten them and brighten them with episodic characters and situations often frankly farcical. He was glad to give the contemporary spectators again and again the kind of comic play that they had most enjoyed; and though he might enrich this comedy of intrigue with a deeper portrayal of character, he did not depart from its principles. It was by slow steps that he ventured to advance from the more or less mechanical form of the 'Etourdi' to the more significant comedy of the 'Ecole des Femmes' and 'Tartuffe.' To the very end Molière sought for laughter even when he was also striving to stimulate thought.

'Lasting works usually have pleased all classes in their own 'time,' said Stedman in discussing Whitman; and this shrewd saying is exemplified in the immediate and enduring popularity of Molière's plays. The Parisian playgoers supported his theatre liberally and sturdily even while his enemies were shrilly protesting. These playgoers knew what they wanted and they knew where to get it. That they valued what they were getting as we rate it to-day, it would be unreasonable to suppose. While posterity now esteems Molière chiefly as a creator of undying characters, his contemporaries held him in regard as a humorist, as the man who made them laugh as an author and at whom they laughed as an actor. A humorist rarely receives recognition in his lifetime, still less appreciation, however popular he may be. Rabelais, for one, was highly esteemed as a scholar and as a physician, but contemporary writers scarcely ever mention his books, which probably seemed to them too low and too broad to demand consideration as literature. Cervantes, for another, survived to see the public liking for his great work proved by the eagerness with which pirate publishers reprinted it; yet it

was more than a century after his death before the discovery was made that 'Don Quixote' was more than a narrative of comic misadventure.

'Humanity moves onward like an army,' so Renan wrote in his youth; 'great men are the scouts in advance, and the bulk 'of the army follows, more or less near; this is why great men are 'not usually known in their century—they are ahead.' This may be true enough of the philosophers and of the original thinkers; but it can never be true of the dramatists, since they cannot risk themselves too far ahead of the main body of their contemporaries. Probably no dramatist has ever been an original thinker, in the largest meaning of the term, just as no practical statesman has ever been. Certainly Shakspere and Molière were not original thinkers, pioneers in speculation, any more than Washington or Lincoln. It was not their function to carry the torch ahead and to lead the way into unexplored regions. Rather was it their duty to hold up a lantern so as to illuminate the way for the main body, and to keep the stragglers from stumbling into the wrong road. It is because Shakspere and Molière were not original thinkers, but interpreters of the eternal commonplaces which cry aloud to be set forth anew for every generation—it is because they kept in close contact with humanity, with the men and women of their own time, that they were able both to please their contemporaries then and to delight us now. Human nature is not changed in the twinkling of an eye; it is only a little transformed with the revolving centuries. Men are men, after all, and once for all; and the portraits painted three hundred years ago are recognisable to-day. Macbeth and Tartuffe are with us still; their souls are the same, even if Macbeth has given up war for finance, and Tartuffe turned from religion to politics.

Perhaps it is due in a measure to his enforced study of the public he had to please that Molière developed so cautiously and tentatively from a writer of brisk farces into the master of high comedy; and yet this retarded growth may be ascribed rather to the absence of any model for his guidance. When he began to write, the comic drama of the French was unreal; it was under the influence of Spanish extravagance; Scarron's broad adaptations were almost unrelated to actual life; and if there is more observation and reflection in Corneille's comedies, there is still not a little artificiality. Molière strives for the real, but he is his own contemporary, after all, conscious that he has only to please these contemporaries; and in the mere mechanism of his plots he never shrinks from utilising the traditional artifi-

cialities to bring characters together or to marry off a young couple swiftly when the play had to end somehow, so that the laughing spectators might leave the theatre satisfied that all is as it should be.

In this less important matter he may be careless at times; but he is never careless in matters that count. There is a clean contrast between his occasional romanticism in plot-making and the eternal reality of his character-drawing. We have no reason to doubt that he knew as well as we do that 'Georges 'Dandin' ends where it begins, and the 'Misanthrope' also. When we have been made acquainted with the chief characters of these two comedies and with the contradiction in which they have entangled themselves, the play may come to an end, for the dramatist has accomplished his purpose completely. The first two acts of the 'Bourgeois Gentilhomme' are given up to the presentation to the public of M. Jourdain, and the actual plot does not emerge into sight until the third act; but this is of small consequence, since the story imports little or nothing and the central character everything. Molière never scorns the niceties of preparation, when preparation is necessary to his major purpose. The opening dialogue of the two sisters in the 'Femmes 'Savantes' takes us into the centre of the action and arouses in us the liveliest interest to see the solution of the dilemma. Tartuffe is prepared for and made transparent long before we are allowed to see him in the flesh. Agnès is permitted to reveal herself completely the moment she appears. In all this there is nothing haphazard, nothing left to chance. Molière never neglects any detail of construction which seems to him of 'the 'essence of the contract.' And it is in these touches that he displays his mastery of the craft of play-making.

Sainte-Beuve insists that Molière is not merely a limner of portraits, but a delineator of society as a whole. He was not a miniaturist, but a fresco-painter, working boldly, with swift certainty of stroke, in the fashion he ascribed to Mignard. He depicted the social organisation of his own time—which is precisely the one thing that Shakspere never attempted, except casually in the 'Merry Wives.' His portrayal revives that society before our eyes and sets it again in front of us as it was when it unconsciously posed to the artist. Beneath the contemporary, we cannot fail to find the permanent, for he gives us the lasting truth about human nature as well as the accidental facts about his own time. Grandet is more elaborately drawn than Harpagon, but he is not more veracious, more vital, more alive. The 'Femmes Savantes' is at bottom as modern as the 'Monde où l'on s'ennuie,' as well as deeper and sincerer.

Any one of Molière's greater comedies is a picture of society united by the social bond, not rent asunder by overt individualism ; and therefore it is characteristically French in its temper. There is sanity not less than thorough workmanship in all these larger comedies ; and there is dignity of purpose also, not mere amusement only and unthinking laughter. In the ' Femmes ' Savantes,' for example, the foolishness of the learned ladies is shown to be not altogether innocent, since it leads Armande to shun the honourable office of wife, and since it dries up the natural affection of Philaminte for Henriette. Molière delights in dealing with the affectations and with the passions that destroy the family and with the vices which corrode and disintegrate society itself—selfishness and self-seeking and hypocrisy. In themselves these themes may not be laughable, but Molière manages to make us laugh while he is making us take thought of ourselves. Subjects which Balzac was to present tragically, Molière contrives to keep within the limits of comedy, thereby giving to comedy a wealth of meaning it had never before conveyed.

In setting before us the men and women of his own time, who are human beings for all time, Molière sometimes simplifies summarily the characters he is presenting, he sometimes exaggerates their essential characteristics, and he sometimes does both, not shrinking from caricature, as in the case of Bélise, in the ' Femmes Savantes.' He is willing enough to sharpen his outline and to heighten his colour when this seems to him needful ; but this necessity is not frequent, and in the most of the larger comedies the characters are presented without any forcing of the note, with only the condensation and swift intensity demanded in the theatre, where every minute is counted.

Molière's characters are not only veracious, they are also astonishingly varied ; and his range of observation is most remarkable. In one play or another he puts on the stage all sorts and conditions of men. He is the only man of letters of his time who gives any thought to the peasants ; he does not often introduce them, but when he did (as in ' Don Juan '), it is with sympathetic understanding. He is familiar also with the male and female riff-raff of the nether world of dark intrigue ; and he draws out of this the sinister figure of Feosine in the ' Avare.' If the Dorante of the ' Bourgeois Gentilhomme ' has not yet fallen to this lower level, he is plainly on the downward path, in spite of his birth and his breeding and his social pretensions.

Molière is well affected toward the court ; he sets the courtiers frequently on the stage ; and almost the monarch himself in ' Tartuffe.' The chief figures in the ' Misanthrope ' all belong to

the circle that immediately surrounded the throne. Molière takes occasion to praise the good judgment of the court and the open-minded and unpedantic criticism of men of the world, who gathered about the person of the monarch. But he is not dazzled by the glitter and he is no flatterer. He holds the foolish marquis up to ridicule again and again; he exhibits Dorante as an unscrupulous adventurer, if not yet a frank swindler; and he paints Don Juan as the boldest of villains. Even the petty nobles of the provinces do not escape his keen observation; and the two Sottenvilles, fitly mated, are immortalised in all their superb self-satisfaction.

Of course, it is the burgher class that he draws most frequently, with the utmost intimacy of knowledge. He brings before us tradesmen and citizens of high and low degree, Orgon and Harpagon, M. Jourdain and Chrysale, with their wives, with their sons and their daughters, and especially with their servants, male and female. When he takes us into the interior of a French family of the middle class under Louis XIV, nothing is more characteristic and nothing displays more his unfailing felicity of observation than the place in these households which is taken by the maidservants. Sometimes the men-servants are authentic peasants, as in the 'Ecole des Femmes' and 'Georges 'Dandin;' but more often not. The valets are a little fantastic, at least there is no denying that Mascarille and Covielle and Scapin are impossible domestics in any realistic representation of family life; and this is the reason we fail to find them in the simpler and more veracious comedies. They are survivals of the cunning slaves of classic comedy, or taken over from the tradition of the contemporary comedy-of-masks.

The maidservants, however, are drawn from real life, caught in the act. They seem at first sight to be variants of a simple type, but they are often clearly individualised. Martine is a peasant girl and Nicole probably comes from the country, whereas Toinette and Dorine seem to be city-bred. They all talk and they all feel as though they belonged to the family—indeed, almost as though the family belonged to them. They are the confidants and the abettors of the daughters' love-affairs. On occasion they voice the sturdy and robust common sense of the author himself. They have a hearty humour and a free tongue, quite impossible of toleration to-day, when servants come and go and when they are trained to know their place and not to step outside of it. They recall the 'mammy' of the old South, who mothered the whole brood of her mistress, who was well aware of her rights as a member of the family, and who did not hesitate to assert them. Dorine, for one, although she is

ready to dodge Orgon's box on the ear, feels herself a privileged character, saying her say boldly, and contradicting her master, secure in the knowledge that she is a fixture in the family. She had rooted herself in the household when Orgon's first wife was yet alive ; and after the mother's death she it was who brought up Valère and Mariane.

A literary masterpiece often derives much of its greatness from the fact that we can find in it much more than the author deliberately put there. We read into it a deeper meaning than he intended ; and this is no betrayal, since he is one of the supreme masters of his art, only because he was able to build 'better 'than he knew.' The little sapling that the author planted and tended during his own brief life strikes down deep roots after his death and grows into a branching tree whose lofty stature he never foresaw. We now discover in Molière, as in Shakspere, much that would greatly surprise them. They wrote for the stage of their own day, for their immediate contemporaries, giving no thought to the generations that were to come after. Yet posterity is glad to appreciate and to analyse in the study to-day what they meant only for the stage of long ago. They pleased the crowd of their own times and still they delight the scholars, the men of affairs and the plain people also, both in the theatre and in the library.

Molière is like Shakspere, once more, in that his plays have never lost their popularity in the playhouse except for a brief season now and again. Critical theories might come and go, but Molière's comedies retained their firm hold on the playgoing public. They have been continuously acted by the Comédie Française, the company of comedians which can pride itself on its direct descent from the little group of actors whom Molière brought back to the capital two and a half centuries ago, and which still cherishes loyally the traditions inherited from its founder. Not only at this unparalleled national theatre have Molière's plays continued to attract unfailing audiences, but also in playhouses of less pretensions. They have retained their power to please the unlettered public in Paris and in the provinces, even when inadequately performed by strolling actors of inferior training. They are still, as they have always been, the plays in which the ambitious young actor strives to prove himself. Their appeal has been potent with the plain people who go to the theatre unthinkingly for the special pleasure to be had there, and there only ; and it has been as indisputable upon the keenest judges of men and letters.

One of the truest tests of a great writer is to call the roll of

his admirers and of his disparagers, of his friends and of his foes. And this trial Molière withstands triumphantly now and always. In his own day he was best appreciated by Boileau and by La Fontaine; and in every generation since then he has been beloved by those whose affection was best worth having —by Goethe and by Fielding, by Scott and by Sainte-Beuve. Goethe, for example, declares, 'I have known and loved Molière 'from my youth, and I have learnt from him during my whole 'life.' And Sainte-Beuve asserts that to love Molière, 'to love 'him sincerely is to have a guarantee against many a defect and 'many a fault; it is to be antipathetic to all pedantry, all artifi- 'ciality of style, all affectation of language; it is to love common- 'sense in others as well as in yourself; it is to be assured against 'the dangers either of over-estimating our common humanity 'or of under-estimating it; it is to be cured for ever of fanaticism 'and intolerance.' Molière's enemies are as honourable to him as his admirers; they are the fanatics and the pedants— Rousseau, for one, and Schlegel, for another. Goethe is characteristically shrewd when he asserts that Schlegel felt that if he had been a contemporary of Molière, he might have been pilloried alongside of Trissotin.

While the broadest critics of every tongue have been abundant in praise, the dramatists of all countries have paid the sincere flattery of imitation. In France, Regnard and Marivaux and Beaumarchais all derive from Molière; they all find inspiration in the study of his comedies; and they are all contained in germ in him. In the nineteenth century Augier and Labiche follow in his footsteps. In England he was imitated while he was yet alive by Dryden; and in its form, if not in its spirit, the comedy of Wycherley and of Congreve is taken from the comedy of Molière. Goldsmith and Sheridan are his pupils, perhaps more or less unconscious of the fact. He was the model for Holberg in the north and for Goldoni in the south; and Lessing, even if a little unsympathetic, profited by his example. And almost every modern dramatist, whether he knows it or not, has to express himself in the mould that was first used by Molière, who is really the earliest of modern dramatists, working in accord with the conditions of the modern theatre.

Nor is his influence confined to the drama alone. The felicitous character-drawing of Steele and Addison in the social essay was due in some measure to their admiration for Molière. Brunetière points out the impress of Molière on Le Sage, and M. Le Breton observes it on Balzac. Fielding began his literary career by adaptations from Molière, whose influence can be discovered easily in the novels of his ripe maturity. It is thus that the great

French comic dramatist's methods of conceiving and presenting character and of handling humorous situation have been transported from the play to prose fiction. This stimulation is as obvious in the novel of the English language as in that of the French. From Le Sage it passes to Smollett and to Dickens; from Fielding and Balzac it is transmitted to Thackeray and Meredith; and from Scott, who received a double current, one direct and the other indirect from 'Gil Blas,' it was spread abroad to all the writers of romanticist fiction who walked in the path trod by the author of the Waverley Novels.

It was only in the early nineteenth century that the novel really proved itself a formidable competitor of the play; and it was only in the mid-years of that century that prose fiction seemed about to overwhelm the drama and to usurp its place. A part of the power of the novel is the direct result of its adoption of the methods of the dramatists, and more especially of Molière. Now, at the beginning of the twentieth century, while the novel is slackening a little, the play is awakening for a renewed rivalry with prose fiction. The modern drama must also avail itself of Molière's methods as it has perforce to accept the external form he established. To-day poetry is languishing, while the novel is flourishing and while the drama is taking on new life. In both of these most prosperous departments of literature we can see the mark of Molière.

Art. V.—THE TERCENTENARY OF THE TELESCOPE.

1. *Celestial Photographs.* By Isaac Roberts. 2 vols. 1894 and 1900.
2. *The Modern Reflecting Telescope.* By G. W. Ritchey. 1904.
3. *Publications of the Lick Observatory.* Volume VIII. 1908.

And other Works.

A perfectly clear account of the principle of the telescope was given by Roger Bacon, but there is nothing to show or suggest that he ever made an instrument. It is fully evident, from the account of his son, that Leonard Digges, a gentleman of Oxfordshire, made a telescope, which amused his friends, as a piece of parlour magic. And in the beginning of the seventeenth century three Dutchmen, probably independently, hit upon the combination of two lenses that brought the church steeple apparently nearer. Nothing is more probable than that several or many persons turned their 'optic tubes' idly to the sky before Galileo had heard the report of the invention; but nothing is more certain than that we attribute to Galileo rightly the real discovery of the telescope's power, and that the discovery was made precisely three hundred years ago.*

The preface to the 'Sidereus Nuncius' is dated 'Padua, 'March 12, 1610.' It offers to the Most Serene Cosmo de Medici,

* In saying this, we do not overlook the claims of Simon Marius to contemporaneity with Galileo in the discovery of Jupiter's satellites. There seems to be no doubt that Marius observed the satellites first almost on the same day as Galileo, but he published nothing until Galileo's discoveries were well known. He made excellent observations, and constructed tables of the satellites' motions which are in some respects better than Galileo's; and in his 'Mundus Jovialis' he gives a modest and convincing account of his work, and makes no claim to rivalry with Galileo. A dozen years later Galileo attacked Marius as a liar and a plagiarist to such effect that the name of Marius is reprobated in almost every history of astronomy. 'The crude labours of this impudent pretender were, however, no sooner given to the world than they fell into deserved oblivion,' says Grant in his well-known 'History of Physical Astronomy.' MM. Oudemans and Bosscha have done good service to history in their 'Réhabilitation d'un Astronome Calomnié' (Archives Néerlandaises des Sciences Exactes et Naturelles. Sér. II. tome viii. p. 115; vii. pp. 258 and 490). But it seems to us that they do their case no good when they accuse Galileo in turn of falsehood and plagiarism.

fourth Grand Duke of Tuscany, 'four stars reserved for your 'famous name, and those not belonging to the common and less 'conspicuous multitude of fixed stars, but in the bright ranks of 'the planets'—the Medicean stars, as Galileo named them; the Galilean satellites of Jupiter, as we have come to call them in these last years, when four others have been found. In the history of the astronomical telescope there is nothing so clear and precise as the maker's account of how he came to make the first.

'About ten months ago a report reached my ears that a Dutchman had constructed a telescope, by the aid of which visible objects, although at a great distance from the eye of the observer, were seen distinctly as if near; and some proofs of its most wonderful performances were reported, which some gave credence to, but others contradicted. A few days after I received confirmation of the report in a letter written from Paris by a noble Frenchman, Jacques Badovere, which finally determined me to give myself up first to enquire into the principle of the telescope, and then to consider the means by which I might compass the invention of a similar instrument, which a little while after I succeeded in doing, through deep study of the theory of refraction; and I prepared a tube, at first of lead, in the ends of which I fitted two glass lenses, both plane on one side, but on the other side one spherically convex, and the other concave. . . .

'It would be altogether a waste of time to enumerate the number and importance of the benefits which this instrument may be expected to confer, when used by land or sea. But, without paying attention to its use for terrestrial objects, I betook myself to observations of the heavenly bodies.' *

A few days' observing cleared the air of clouds of bad philosophising.

'The surface of the Moon is not perfectly smooth, free from inequalities, and exactly spherical, as a large school of philosophers considers with regard to the Moon and the other heavenly bodies, but on the contrary it is full of inequalities, uneven, full of hollows and protuberances, just like the surface of the Earth itself, which is varied everywhere by lofty mountains and deep valleys.

'The next object which I have observed is the essence or substance of the Milky Way. By the aid of a telescope anyone may behold this in a manner which so distinctly appeals to the senses that all the disputes which have tormented philosophers through so many ages are exploded at once by the irrefragable evidence of our eyes, and we are freed from wordy disputes upon this subject, for the galaxy is nothing else than a mass of innumerable stars planted together in clusters.'

* The Sidereal Messenger of Galileo Galilei . . . a translation by E. S. Carlos. London, 1880.

On January 7, 1610, Galileo saw for the first time three of the Medicean stars; 'and although I believed them to be fixed stars, 'yet they made me somewhat wonder, because they seemed to be 'arranged exactly in a straight line, parallel to the ecliptic.' On the next night they were differently arranged, but were still with the planet; on succeeding nights as the planet moved they attended him, and presented for all but those who would not see a visible example of a Copernican system.

Before the end of the year Galileo had seen, but not understood, Saturn's ring, and had observed the phases of Venus; his telescope had made the fundamental discoveries in observational astronomy.

We celebrate in the present year, then, the tercentenary of the first employment of the telescope and of astronomical discovery; not of observation—for Tycho Brahe, greatest master of that art, had been dead five years when Galileo made his telescope—but of discovery made possible by the power of gathering light and producing an enlarged image. It fell to the lot of Kepler to solve the problem presented by Tycho's measures, and to be puzzled by the anagrams in which Galileo made the first announcements of his discoveries. The telescope has contributed equally to observation and to discovery; for the moment we will deal with the latter rather than the former, and will propose to ourselves to glance at the progress which three hundred years have shown in the art of telescope building and of discovery by sheer power of gathering light.

The greatest lens in present use is the 40-inch at the Yerkes Observatory of the University of Chicago; the greatest mirror the 60-inch at the Carnegie Institution's Observatory on Mount Wilson. Each is perhaps thirty times as great in diameter as the first of its kind; at the moment the refractor and the reflector stand nearly level in respect of the progress they have made in point of size. But the past history of these instruments, both telescopes, yet so different in nature that they had better be counted as instruments altogether distinct, suggests that we shall do well to consider them separately. There is, in fact, a difference which makes this course almost imperative. All the great advances in the construction of reflecting telescopes have been made by amateurs, and we know a great deal about the methods by which they have reached success; most of the great advances in refracting telescopes have been due to professional glass makers and opticians, who have published scarcely anything of their methods, and have from time to time gone perilously near to losing essential secrets of their trade by over secrecy. Progress with the refracting telescope was hampered by the difficulty of

obtaining glass, and the long delay in devising the means of achromatising the lenses. The reflecting telescope, invented a hundred years later, avoided the former difficulty by using metal for its mirrors, and was by nature free from the latter. The reflector has not only been made by amateurs, but one may almost say that it has nearly always required that its makers should be its users ; so that the history of the telescope and the history of the astronomer and his discoveries are parts of the same story.

It must have occurred to everyone who has read the life of Sir William Herschel that we are told singularly little of the methods by which he made his instruments, or of the way in which he obtained his first knowledge of the optician's art. A chance reference in the memoirs of his sister Caroline gives us the clue. She tells how at the end of their first winter in Bath (1772–3) she had hoped that the time had come when her brother might have leisure to give her instruction and attention. ' But I was greatly ' disappointed ; for, in consequence of the harassing and ' fatiguing life he had led during the winter months, he used to ' retire to bed with a basin of milk or a glass of water, and ' Smith's " Harmonics " and " Optics," Ferguson's " Astronomy," ' &c., and so went to sleep buried under his favourite authors.'

So we turn to the ' Compleat System of Opticks, in four books ' . . . by Robert Smith, LL.D., Professor of Astronomy and ' Experimental Philosophy at Cambridge, and Master of ' Mechanicks to his Majesty,' and find the key to the whole matter. The arts of grinding and polishing glass, developed and fully described by Huyghens, had been applied by Newton in the construction of his first tiny reflecting telescope, and by Hadley and Molyneux, who early constructed much larger instruments upon the same model. Molyneux left among his papers a very complete account of the processes, and Smith, who had worked with him at Kew, persuaded two or three London opticians to take up the work of making reflecting telescopes, ' being desirous ' that these instruments might become cheap and of public sale.' One example at least of these telescopes survives in the instrument preserved in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, labelled until lately ' Newton's Telescope,' though clearly described and figured by Robert Smith as the instrument which was made for him, and which was no doubt mounted in the Plumian Professor's Observatory on the roof of the great gate. The processes of manufacture seem then to have been complete for fifty years at least, and for fifty years they had stood almost still for want of driving power.

Professional opticians had made and sold reflecting telescopes

in numbers ; no gentleman's establishment was complete without one ; but for the seventy years during which the instrument had been made, no discovery had been made by it.

The immense results which were won by Herschel's courage and physical strength are common knowledge. But it has always seemed to us that insufficient attention has been given to the question, How good from the mechanical and optical point of view were the telescopes that he made ? His collected writings contain almost nothing which will enable us to judge. We surmise that he learned the art of mirror grinding from Robert Smith's book, for there is no hint that he employed any professional assistance. He has left an elaborate account of the mounting of the 4-foot telescope which was his great feat of construction, but he says practically nothing which can give us an idea of its defining power and precise optical efficiency as distinct from its mighty power of gathering light.

How far had he mastered the art of giving the precise parabolic form to the speculum ? Newton had, of course, realised its desirability, but made no real attempt to achieve it. Hadley and Molyneux do not seem to have succeeded. It is recorded of the optician Short that he was the first to make a true parabolic speculum ; but the evidence for the statement is not very convincing. In Herschel's writings it is not easy to find a word upon the subject.

There is, however, one piece of negative evidence ; the great telescope was not a Newtonian, but was constructed on the 'front view' principle, to avoid the loss of light, direct and indirect, which is occasioned by the introduction of the second mirror which ordinarily brings the beam out at right angles through the side of the tube. The tube was made larger than the mirror : the mirror was somewhat inclined to the axis of the tube ; and the observer at its mouth peered over the edge through an eyepiece mounted upon the lip. Now to tilt a speculum is fatal to its perfection of defining power, and the mere fact that Herschel could deliberately tilt it may be accepted almost as proof that he was not very critical in the matter of definition.

We have, in fact, to go forward some forty or fifty years before we find in the work of Foucault and Lord Rosse and Lassell a definite success in perfecting the figure of the mirror. Foucault devised beautiful optical methods of testing ; Lord Rosse gave to the processes of manufacture an immense refinement, and constructed specula which have never yet been approached for size ; Lassell was the first to mount a large reflector on the equatorial mounting which alone can make it a handy instrument to work.

By about the year 1860 the reflecting telescope had become an instrument of unrivalled grasp of light, its aperture counted by feet instead of by inches; yet it was an instrument entirely in the hands of amateurs, and of two or three amateurs. And for an excellent reason. The metallic speculum quickly deteriorates in polish, and cleaning is but a partial remedy. After a little while it must be repolished; a ten thousandth of an inch of surface must be removed, and a ten thousandth of an inch is everything in the figure of the mirror. In a word, the most difficult operation of all, the final figuring, must be performed anew every time that the mirror needs to be repolished. Probably no one since his day has reached the supreme skill of Lord Rosse in manipulation; yet Lord Rosse confesses that after an interval of a few months his hand had lost much of its cunning. He could not be sure of success when the big speculum was sent down to the polishing machine. Unsuccessful trials might be necessary before the inspired moment came when he could deliver a polished speculum in all perfection to the mercy of the soft Irish climate.

Had there been no alternative to hard speculum metal for the construction of mirrors, it is not likely that more than an occasional man would have been found with the patience and skill to master so refractory a material. A great step in advance was made as soon as it was discovered that a film of silver could be deposited on glass, tough enough to bear polishing. Glass was no new material for specula: some of the earliest had been made from it, but silvered on the back with a mercury amalgam, like the old-fashioned looking-glasses. Of course passage through the glass to the reflecting surface behind, and out again, produced the most undesirable complications in the pencil of light, which became further involved with the weaker reflections from the front surface, until all nicety of definition was hopelessly lost. The beauty of the more modern method lies in the fact that the silver is on the front face of the figured glass surface, which figure, once established, is unaffected by what may happen to the reflecting silver film. The film may be polished and polished again without touching the glass underneath. At pleasure it may be dissolved clean away when it becomes unfit, and a new film deposited in its place. In place of constant refiguring demanding the highest optical skill we have now but one figuring and a constant resilvering, which, though to some degree troublesome and difficult, is a process in no way to be compared for difficulty with the refiguring. With the introduction of the silver-on-glass mirror it became for the first time possible for an observatory manned by professional astronomers to risk acquiring an instrument which had till then been manage-

able only by the rarely-skilled amateur optician. And in the same moment it became possible for any man of mechanical skill and enthusiasm to make for himself a telescope more powerful than any which had existed till Herschel's time. To-day there are dozens of men in the country who have made mirrors up to 9 or 12 inches in diameter, with the simplest of home-made appliances—mirrors that are many of them excellent in figure, that are mounted in a sufficient manner, and that do comparatively very little sustained astronomical work.

Some men have gone so far as to maintain that there is a kind of antipathetic relation between the qualities of brain that make the observer and the mirror builder. The names of Herschel and Rosse and Lassell are sufficient to dispose of the allegation as a general truth ; nevertheless there is more than a grain of truth in it, precisely as there is something more than a pleasantry in the saying that to be known as an inventor of calculating machines is fatal to the expectation that the inventor will ever get anything completed. For without doubt the ambition to be improving instruments and methods is often a bar to sustained observation. There comes a time when it is necessary to say : I know that this instrument can be still further improved, but I am not going to do anything to it for five years. I will set it to work and make the best of it as it is ; which being done, it is surprising how often the little defects, which seemed very serious when one was concentrated upon spying out defects, recede into unimportance when one finds what good performance can be done by an instrument that is not above mechanical reproach.

There comes a time, however, when new methods demand a definite advance in the accuracy of instrument construction ; when, for example, the application of photography required a steadiness in the support of the mirror and an accuracy in the driving of the whole telescope such as had never been obtained. The early photographs of Henry in America and of De la Rue in England evaded rather than solved the difficulty. Henry, in particular, anticipated the device adopted much later at Paris, of following the Moon during the few seconds of exposure required, by keeping the telescope still and slipping the plate upon it. A device of so limited an application did not go very far towards solving the problem how to support a mirror without straining it in the slightest degree, yet to fix it so rigidly to a telescope turning into all sorts of positions that it neither tilted nor slipped on its support by the smallest fraction of an inch. The solution of this problem we owe in no small degree to Dr. Common, who, about the year 1876, bought a 3-foot mirror

and mounted it in a manner which embraced several highly ingenious and very valuable features. The building of the 3-foot was, however, merely a little experiment to clear the way for a much larger enterprise—the construction of an instrument of 5-foot aperture, made, mirror and mounting and all, in the workshops in his garden at Ealing.

His predecessors in mirror grinding began gradually and worked up to their largest results by easy stages. Common, uniquely courageous, decided that as he wanted to make a 5-foot mirror, he would attack the full-size problem at once, and he succeeded. The completion of the instrument coincided very nearly with the introduction of the dry gelatine plate in photography, and the 5-foot telescope reached in one flight a height which has only within the last few months been equalled.

The impetus which this success gave to the art of telescope construction must not be judged by the results which the telescope itself produced, which were indeed unhappily few. Common showed what the telescope could do by his magnificent photograph of the Orion nebula ; and in a little while began to pull the instrument to pieces and turn it into other forms, interesting as examples of engineering, difficult as experiments in optics, but unfortunately contributing not very much to the end which telescopes, after all, are intended to serve. The fascinations of building and rebuilding had overcome that intense passion for observing which is, to tell the truth, almost the rarest quality in an astronomer. But the success of Common's building inspired another Englishman to a triumph of observation.

Early in the eighties Isaac Roberts, of Liverpool, ordered a photographic reflecting telescope from the famous shops of Sir Howard Grubb in Dublin. Almost alone among amateur workers with the reflector, he had the distinguished merit of being satisfied with his instrument and his processes, in none of which did he make any startling advance on the instrumental side. But from the observatory on the summit of Crowborough Beacon, to which he transferred the instrument from Liverpool, he produced a regular stream of results, which flowed for a while into the collection of the Royal Astronomical Society, and was turned, later on, into the two volumes of ' Celestial Photographs ' which are his enduring monument. Towards the end of his life Isaac Roberts was sometimes criticised for a certain inability to admit that processes might be improved and results might be bettered. The attitude had the merit of its defects in the resolution which it engendered to allow no interruption in the pursuit of the aim which he had set before him, to record faithfully, with all the added power which photography gives, the aspects

of all the faint and difficult objects within his reach. Mature judgement finds in his work two qualities altogether admirable —he pursued the less showy and more difficult objects which offer few attractions to the picture-maker, so that now, years after the two volumes were published, we may find in them photographs of things which are unobtainable elsewhere; and secondly, he gave with each photograph a precise statement of its orientation, the scale upon which it was reproduced, and the identification and position of selected stars appearing in it; obvious things to do, one might say, were it not that they are curiously rare, and the last unique.

An examination of Isaac Roberts's two volumes suggests a problem of the highest interest to the solution of which very little has as yet been done. Photography at what used to be the eye end of the telescope has supplanted the eye and the pencil so nearly completely—we speak for the moment of records of stars, clusters, and nebulæ—that our knowledge of the appearance of the sidereal universe is now locked up in thousands of photographs scattered all over the world: a small proportion published in volumes such as his; a few more reproduced in the publications of observatories, or in the journals; a selection obtainable from the published collection of the Royal Astronomical Society. The student of a problem such as the structure of the Milky Way, and the relation to the star clouds of the various special categories of objects that congregate within its boundaries, is in a difficult position. His difficulties are those of the English topographer before the advent of Ordnance Survey maps, who might search in a thousand places the local surveys and the tithe maps constructed on all sorts of scales, made with every kind of instrument and executed with every degree of precision. For the topographer trying to piece together a map of the country the case was hopeless. Only in rare instances did the maps show any fixed points by which they could be attached to the general plan. For the sidereal student trying to piece together a photographic study of the Milky Way the case is not hopeless, for the celestial charts have a multitude of fixed points in the known stars which they show. But the labour of sorting out and identification is so deterrent that almost nothing has as yet been done. Nor is the fault altogether that of the student; he has some reason to complain that history is repeating itself in a disappointing way. A hundred years ago observers with the then existing instruments of precision, which produced the raw material for star catalogues, considered that they had done their part when the said material had been printed still raw and unpalatable. Bessel in Germany, Airy in this country, reformed

this bad habit, introducing the principle that it was the business of the observer to serve up his result in a form ready for assimilation, digestible without pain. That principle is now accepted by all workers in the older branches of astronomy; we can only regret that a reform of such evident value in the old should not have exercised an influence on the new to start it at once, almost automatically, upon the right path.

Unfortunately no one since Isaac Roberts has done even what he did, by providing the identification of three or four stars on each plate, which is an inestimable help in the ready study of the picture. The tendency has been rather to go backward, to provide pictures for admiration rather than records for study; and this is an aspect of the subject for which we have little sympathy. Picture-making has done more to limit the usefulness of the big photographic telescopes of to-day than any of the manifold difficulties by which their working is impeded. The ambition to make a picture leads to giving exaggerated attention to the more showy objects; the ambition to make a picture leads to photographing these objects many times over, with continually increasing, most arduous exposures, in the hope of obtaining results more and more brilliant; and finally, in the most magnificent collection of celestial photographs hitherto published, the ambition to make a picture has banished from the margins of the plate all the information that might have been so useful in its study.

The eighth volume of the Publications of the Lick Observatory had been awaited with peculiar interest. Fourteen years ago Dr. Common's 3-foot reflector, which had passed into the hands of Mr. Edward Crossley, of Halifax, was presented to the Lick Observatory. When Professor J. E. Keeler was appointed Director in 1898 he undertook, as his personal observing work, the task of photographing with this instrument the brighter nebulae and star clusters. In two years he had conquered the not small difficulties inherent in the use of this particular telescope, when his lamented, almost sudden, death cut short the programme two-thirds completed. Already enough had been published to show that the results were of the highest order of perfection and beauty. To complete the work and publish it in the most splendid manner possible was the natural outcome of a desire to perpetuate the memory of his distinguished, brief directorship. The eighth volume of Publications, in which his work at last appears, we owe to the loyal devotion of his colleagues and the generosity of his friends. Nothing more beautiful than the seventy photogravure plates in this volume has ever been seen. They are triumphs of astronomical picture-making;

triumphs of laborious skill in guiding the telescope during exposures of three and four hours' duration; triumphs of the photo-engraver's art. The objects which they depict are unrivalled for beauty and mystery. The discovery of the spiral nebulae was the memorable feat of Lord Rosse's telescope at Parsonstown; the confirmation and elucidation of the spiral character of these nebulae was the most striking performance of the reflecting telescope adapted to photography. But the merit of this performance was due in the first instance to other observers than Keeler, and especially due to Isaac Roberts; and we cannot but regret that in their anxiety to honour the memory of their colleague, the unnamed authors of the preface to his memorial volume have struck a false note. 'The story 'of his wonderful success with this difficult instrument is familiar 'to all readers of astronomical literature: this form of telescope 'was in effect born again; and his contributions to our know-'ledge of the nebulæ were epoch-making.' If we are to have any regard at all for historic truth—albeit in a memorial notice—these claims cannot be admitted. If the Crossley reflector represents a new birth, then that birth took place in the garden at Ealing under the auspices of Dr. Common. If photographs of spiral nebulae are a new birth, then the first members of the family were born of another instrument, before ever the Crossley reflector went to Mount Hamilton. If each memorable improvement in performance is a reincarnation, and marks the epoch from which a new era must be dated, then confusion and rival chronologies must be the offspring.

The profoundest admiration for the beauty of the Crossley reflector volume must be tinged with regret that so much has been sacrificed to picture-making; that the method of its presentation is in some respects retrograde. We speak, of course, from our point of view that every published photograph should bear with it all possible information that can be useful to the student. True, we do not demand of an artist that he should exhibit with his landscape the latitude and longitude of his point of view, the azimuth of his central axis, the angular scale value, or a table of identifications of the objects in the range of vision. But we should demand all this information if he were not a picture-maker but a photo-topographer. And it is because we feel that the photo-topography of the sky is in some danger of being subordinated to picture-making that we venture to utter a faint disparagement of an otherwise wonderful piece of work. It depicts in marvellous beauty many objects which were known less perfectly before. 'The main purpose of 'this volume is to reproduce and make available for study the

'larger and more interesting nebulæ and clusters on the pro-'gramme, sixty-eight in number. The thirty-six subjects not 'reproduced are for the most part small or apparently not of 'special interest.' Yet to the student they should have a very special interest indeed, for they are probably objects of which no photograph whatever is available. We can but express the hope that these thirty-six disparaged objects may appear in a form less sumptuous perhaps, but equally useful for serious study.

We have noted already how reflecting telescopes began, and for long remained, outside the domain of the professional optician and the professional astronomer. Even when the introduction of the silver-on-glass mirror made them possible as part of the equipment of a professional observatory, it remained true that their best performances were done in the hands of enthusiastic amateurs. And the principle that a man should have made his own telescope if he wants to get the best possible results from a reflector is re-affirmed by a study of Mr. G. W. Ritchey's optical work at the Yerkes Observatory, and afterwards at the Solar Observatory of the Carnegie Institution at Mount Wilson and Pasadena. In observatories on this side of the Atlantic the mechanics' shop is a small affair, the optical shop non-existent—for good and sufficient reasons. The idea that an observatory should be able to make its own instruments was first realised at Chicago, and the Yerkes Observatory was happy when it secured the services of Mr. Ritchey as Director of Instrument Construction. As engineer and optician he made his name at Chicago, and as a natural consequence was carried off by Director Hale on the great *trek* to Mount Wilson which left the Yerkes Observatory a little deserted. In the instrument shops at Pasadena every piece of the splendid equipment upon the mountain has been made; only one or two of the castings, which, *being over five tons in weight*, were too heavy for the Observatory tools, were machined in San Francisco. Before he left Chicago Mr. Ritchey put together an admirable account of his optician's craft, which was published by the Smithsonian Institution very happily annexed to a reprint of Henry Draper's classic memoir on the silvered-glass telescope. The account fills the modest astronomer with admiration, equally blended with envy. As representing the mature experience of an optician who has worked under unrivalled conditions, this work has obtained, and well deserves, the most careful study.

Nothing is more remarkable than the simplicity of the mechanical means by which the optician secures his refinements of

optical figure. The mirror to be worked is set on a turn-table and slowly rotated. The grinding, and afterwards the polishing tools, are moved backwards and forwards over the surface by a crank motion ; a second crank ensures that the motion shall not be straight backwards and forwards, but endowed with a second component that makes the resultant motion epicycloidal on the rotating glass beneath. Given a solid machine, the resulting figure must be one of revolution. Of the infinite variety of figures of revolution one only is optically sufficient—the paraboloid. With the shallow curvature of a telescope mirror the paraboloid departs from the sphere perhaps a thousandth of an inch, and the departure must be perfectly graded and proportioned. To obtain this refinement of figure all that is necessary is to adjust the relative throw of the two cranks of the machine ; to control the adjustment, all that is necessary is to possess intuitive genius and the experience of half a lifetime.

When the rough and the fine grinding are done, and the mirror has been brought to some degree of polish, it is time to begin testing the figure. The basis of this process is the well-known 'knife-edge' test devised by Foucault, which enables one to inspect a spherical mirror, and if it is perfect, to see it completely full of light. But when it came to converting the spherical to the necessary paraboloidal form, it was necessary, in the old practice, to proceed in tedious fashion ring by ring, and it was almost impossible to ensure a perfect figure by any short of an unlimited number of tests. The great optical interest of Mr. Ritchey's procedure is that he dispenses with all this tedious business by the simple but expensive process of making two mirrors when he requires only one, the incidental supernumerary being a perfect flat, that most difficult form of all to achieve. He begins by making a perfect spherical mirror ; with that as an auxiliary for testing purposes, he has no difficulty in making a flat of the same size. The flat in its turn serves to control the process of turning the spherical into a true paraboloid ; and finally, if he so desires, the paraboloid enables him to construct a perfect convex hyperboloid for a telescope of Cassegrain form.

We trust that non-technical readers will pardon the technicality. Like a theorem in more unuseful branches of pure mathematics, which gives, we are assured, the most perfect artistic pleasure to those who can understand it, this delightful sequence of operations is supremely beautiful, and happily intelligible to a much larger circle of admirers. We need scarcely point out to them its especial charm—at each stage Foucault's

test can be applied in its entirety; the whole surface can be examined at one glance; the tedious process of groping ring by ring has been abolished.

It is a commonplace that luxuries immediately become necessities when a man has money. A British astronomer has so rarely a chance of spending a thousand pounds that he is able to regard with a pleasant air of detached amusement an American colleague's idea of what is strictly necessary in a solar observatory.

'A solar observatory provided with an outfit of instruments, and left to do its work without possibility of improvement or change, could never attain the best results. On the contrary, it must have the means of producing new types of instruments and modifying old ones, as the development of the work may suggest. In other words, a shop completely equipped with all appliances necessary for the most refined construction of both the mechanical and optical parts of instruments should form an integral part of a solar observatory.'

And again, the Sun is only a star; the stars were formed from the nebulae; the nebulae can be studied to advantage only with a large reflecting telescope; and so 'it is a fortunate circum-'stance that the construction and use of a great reflecting 'telescope is a logical element in the general plan of research 'laid down for the solar observatory.' Happy is the man who can afford to be logical! Resistless, unrelenting logic, with both hands in the purse of the Carnegie Institution, has put up in the pleasant health resort of Pasadena, at the foot of Mount Wilson, the finest instrument-shop in the world, strangely contrasting with the tumble-down shanties from which the most renowned makers have furnished all other observatories.

The tremendous activities on Mount Wilson are a riotous celebration of the telescope's tercentenary. Coney Island, they tell us, is the most perfect expression of liberty upon God's earth; Mount Wilson we may call a demonstration of the most untrammelled telescope construction under heaven. With the exception of the 5-foot reflector, which is more or less normal, nothing is like any telescope that ever was. The advantage of the fixed horizontal telescope fed with a rotating mirror was supposed to be its cheap construction and general accessibility. On Mount Wilson they have preferred to build the whole thirty feet above ground to avoid air-currents from the heated earth; and the whole erection louvred in white canvas is like nothing but the dwelling of the Llama of Tashi Lumpo. Thirty feet above ground it is found impossible to keep the spectrographs at a constant temperature; immediately a new form of instrument is planned, having the mirrors high up on a steel tower, and

projecting the beam vertically downwards into a well, at the bottom of which is a spectroscopic laboratory. Immediately the 70-foot tower is found to work, another of 150 feet is projected and rapidly built. The 70-foot tower suffers by shaking of the wind; what more simple than to make the skeleton 150-foot a double skeleton, every tubular member of the outer enclosing a slenderer tube belonging to the inner, so that two completely independent towers stand on the same site, and one is completely enclosed limb by limb in the other? Such clever and fantastic engineering is fine and interesting, and very costly. We have yet to be convinced that it is real business.

Is there not in truth a double danger, that extravagance of scientific enterprise may defeat its own purpose by over-production in one place, and killing moderate ambitions elsewhere? To deal with the output of the photographic instruments on Mount Wilson might very well demand the whole time of several hundred people in Pasadena below. Before long we may expect that the question will be raised seriously, not in an unfriendly way, but nevertheless gravely, whether it is not possible to overdo the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake; whether the intellectual benefits of research are not lost when research is conducted upon a manufacturing basis, with all the mechanical machinery and organisation essential in industry; whether in fact a man can become a part of the huge machine upon Mount Wilson and preserve the better part of his intellectual nature? We suspect that the solution of these doubts rests very largely upon the prospect of finding in the Sun some indications of how his output of energy is maintained. So long as it was supposed that this energy was derived by the contraction of his bulk, that it was just the energy acquired by falling bodies analogous to the energy of water-power upon the earth, it appeared that there might not be much to learn. But recent physics suggest the fascinating idea that it may not be impossible to extract a part of the great energy now apparently hopelessly locked up inside each atom; that though we cannot for the moment do it with terrestrial atoms, the Sun may be doing it from his substance, and that some day we may find out how. Grant the bare possibility, and no effort may be spared in trying to reach this end of infinite importance.

We have wondered whether enormous activity in one place acts as a deterrent upon men who must be content with means that seem by comparison ridiculously small, under skies that beside the Californian look hopelessly discouraging. No one can deny that the men of Mount Hamilton and Mount Wilson talk in a way that is very depressing to the less highly favoured.

They could not themselves, they sometimes say, tolerate the uncertain conditions that prevail elsewhere; they sympathise, and can hardly advise that such and such a scheme offers much prospect of success, in climates so poor as those enjoyed by the greater part of the world. Not always openly, but often between the lines, one may find the half expression of this feeling. We hail, then, with double pleasure a proof that energy and courage may be rewarded in the climate of Greenwich no less than farther West.

It is no secret that, shortly after the discovery of Jupiter's seventh satellite, the discoverer visited Greenwich, and was shown a plate that had on it a faint image supposed to be the new satellite. He threw cold water on the idea; that object was excessively difficult on Mount Hamilton; with a somewhat smaller instrument under the thick London sky the satellite could not possibly be photographed. Nevertheless it was, and was followed for many nights; and next season an eighth satellite was discovered at Greenwich. It came in the nick of time to answer the question then in the papers: Shall Greenwich Observatory be moved? We have heard no more talk of such a calamity. Observation at Greenwich is more arduous, more wasteful of time, more disheartening than in the clear climates of the West and the South. The Royal Observatory is to be the more congratulated on having upon its staff two observers of exceptional courage and skill. One found the satellite; he gave the credit to the other, 'who had brought the 30-inch 'reflector up to concert-pitch, which is half a tone higher than the 'Continental pitch.'

If we seem to have spoken too much of the reflecting telescope, and to have neglected the refractor, it is for the reason that we have already given, that the reflector has always been made by non-professional opticians who have placed their experience freely at the disposal of brother makers, while the construction of large objectives, entirely in the hands of professionals, has been surrounded with the usual professional mystery. But we must not forget that the tercentenary is of the refractor; the reflector is a hundred years its junior. It is time, then, that we look to see what improvements three hundred years have made in the refracting telescope.

Its early history is sufficiently simple. As soon as the early makers tried to increase the size of their lenses, they found themselves confronted with the difficulty that a single lens could not be made to give a sharp image with reasonable focal length; to get the required degree of magnification they were compelled to make their telescopes enormously long—so long

that tubes became impossible, and the 'aerial' telescope, as it was named, consisted of the lenses and a long series of diaphragms mounted upon a stiffened plank, suspended from a pole by an elaborate arrangement of cords designed to support the weight of the plank without suffering it to bend.

'A great variety of these machines may be seen in "Hevelius's Machina Caelestis"; but astronomy at last was very happily freed from this expensive lumber by the ingenuity of the great Hugenius, who, placing the object-glass upon a long upright pole, contrived to direct its axis towards any object by a fine silk line coming down from the glass above to the eyeglass below.' *

It would be incredible that anyone could have used these contrivances successfully, were it not that we possess the discoveries actually made with them, both in this country and abroad. Here, so far as we know, there is no relic of the use of these instruments; but at the Paris Observatory one may see the two wide towers which used to be open to the sky, and which served to support the objectives of these long telescopes.

The refractor was being driven out of the field by the Newtonian refractor when Dollond's invention of the achromatic object glass reduced it at once to manageable proportions. There are few instances of natural sagacity more remarkable than this, for it ran contrary to all received theory, contrary to the direct experiment of Newton himself; and Euler confesses

'that there should be two kinds of glass, in which the refraction of the mean rays is nearly equal, whilst that of the extremes differs most enormously, appeared to me to shock good sense; and perhaps I should never have submitted to the proofs which Mr. Dollond produced to support this strange phenomenon if Mr. Clairaut, who must at first have been equally surprised at it, had not most positively assured me that Dollond's experiments were but too well founded.' †

This invention of the achromatic telescope is not the least of the improvements in arts and manufactures which England owes to the Huguenot Spitalfields weavers. It placed the country for many years in the front rank for optical work; at the same time it provided a leading case in Patent Law, when Lord Mansfield confirmed the patent granted to the Dollonds, when it was clearly proved that Mr. Chester More Hall, having made the same discovery thirty years before, had made no practical use of it.

* Robert Smith's 'Opticks.' Book III. p. 354.

† Kelly, 'Life of John Dollond,' p. 72. Translation from Euler.

Professor Grant, in his ' History of Physical Astronomy,' has pointed out the remarkable fact that no astronomical discovery whatever followed upon the construction of the reflecting telescope or the achromatic refractor. Huyghens and Cassini with their unwieldy instruments had done all that much more perfect instruments of the same aperture could achieve—or was it that a period of slackness had overtaken the observers ?—and no great advance in the power of refractors could be made until the manufacture of flint glass had been perfected. Early in the last century a Swiss mechanic, Guinand, made the required improvement, but to this day it is not generally known in what the improvement consisted. The secret of manufacture has remained in the possession of very few ; and we believe that no large optical disc has ever succeeded that was not produced by this process or formula, whose possessors have more than once so conducted themselves that the world has been in danger of losing the secret altogether.

Throughout last century there was steady progress with few outstanding features of interest. In 1836 twelve inches was the limit of aperture ; by 1845 it had become fifteen, and there for many years it stayed, while the manufacture of the glass had returned from the Continent to England ; for Messrs. Chance of Birmingham had acquired a member of the family with the precious secret. Early in the seventies the limit jumped suddenly to twenty-five inches, on the construction of Mr. Newall's refractor, now at Cambridge. By the eighties it had reached thirty inches, and before the close of the century the 40-inch refractor had been made by Alvan Clark and mounted at the Yerkes Observatory near Chicago.

Of the technical history of this series of objectives next to nothing has been made public. We know that the principal difficulty has always been with the glass. We know that there has been scarcely any variation in the form of the lenses, for that is pretty strictly determined by the properties of the two glasses which are used ; and there were no more than two to select from. What improvements may have been made in the arts of polishing and figuring are guarded by the living makers, or have died with the dead. We know only that not more than two or three men at any one time have possessed the particular blend of experience and intuition that puts the final touches infallibly right. The case of the refractor is altogether different from that of the mirror. The latter must be of one precise geometrical figure, from which not the slightest departure can be allowed. In the refractor we have four surfaces to be adjusted one upon another ; the final processes are quite empirical. No

one knows precisely what the figures of the final surfaces may be. When the lens is nearing completion it is set up in the testing gallery, and the image of an artificial star examined. From the defects of the image the optician knows what he must do to correct it, but precisely what he does or why he does it he never tells; perhaps he cannot tell.

The question is often asked, Have we reached the limit in the construction of refracting telescopes? Does the failure of the 50-inch telescope which was a side-show in the Paris Exhibition of 1900 mean that construction can go no further? There can be no difficulty in answering this question in the negative. The Exhibition telescope ended in fiasco and bankruptcy because its owners were no astronomers, but a syndicate of journalistic persons. 'I conceived the idea, "La Lune à un '"mètre," and the catchword flew round the world as fast as 'the electric telegraph could carry it.' It is not clear that any responsible scientific man was permitted to examine the instrument critically. But we know that it was only the photographic objective that was finished, and to-day the instrument enjoys the hospitality of the cellars at Meudon, waiting till its price comes down to tempt a purchaser. The instrument was of the horizontal type, fed with light from an immense siderostat, but in its unfinished state it contributed nothing to the solution of our question. So far as the mere completion of the objective is concerned, there are probably no difficulties that could not be overcome. But whether an instrument of this size could be mounted on an equatorial mounting in the ordinary manner is altogether another question, which admits of fairly precise discussion. For optical reasons the length of the telescope must increase somewhat faster than in direct proportion to the diameter of the objective; and it is clear that the weight of the mounting to carry the tube and the dome to cover it must increase a little more rapidly than the cube of the length of the telescope. Hence with a telescope of the largest size the addition of a few inches to the aperture doubles the cost. The question of mounting becomes then a more costly and serious matter than any other.

We can scarcely imagine nowadays what can have been the condition of Herschel's mounting and gear after exposure to a wet winter, but at least no great refinement of mechanism was possible until the instrument was sheltered from the weather. A revolving dome having been provided to cover it, the next question was to get the observer comfortably to the eye-end of the instrument in whatever position he might be placed. As telescopes grew larger this became a more and more serious

difficulty, till at last the necessary vertical range of the observer became twenty or thirty feet, and his horizontal range a circle of perhaps seventy feet in diameter. The first solution of the problem was the rising floor proposed by Sir Howard Grubb, of Dublin, in his sketch-plan of the Lick telescope. The American builders adopted his idea, and it was followed by the same firm in building the Yerkes telescope, and by Sir Howard himself in the instruments for Oxford and the Cape. It has some considerable advantages—notably the ease with which heavy things like the objective can be raised to or lowered from the tube—but it has two great defects: the horizontal motion of the observer is not provided; he must continually shift his seat, and whenever the floor is let down it drives up from below a rush of warm air impairing for some minutes the performance of the telescope. A better scheme is that adopted at Meudon and Potsdam, where the elevated observing platform, hung from the dome itself, turns with it and keeps the observer opposite the shutter opening. In speaking of the comfort of observers we must mention the elbowed telescopes devised by Loewy for the French observatories, and that later form in which suggestions from many sources were built by Sir Howard Grubb into the Sheepshanks telescope of the Cambridge Observatory. The horizontal form of telescope, fixed, but fed with light from a moving mirror, has already been mentioned. In the equatorial form of mounting, clockwork driving counteracts the rotation of the earth and keeps the object stationary in the field of view. So soon as the telescope is required to photograph, the precision of the clockwork becomes of prime importance, and automatic control of it a necessity. Yet outside British observatories the latter fact is scarcely realized. Elbowed telescopes have been highly developed in France. Russia has specialized in instruments for determining precise star places; Germany in the heliometer and in new kinds of glass. The United States have been most lavish; and Ireland still has the greatest telescope in the world, no longer at work.

In three hundred years telescope construction has become a vast and widely ramifying subject. We have said nothing of the instruments for measurement of star places, nor of the big star cameras, an essential part of modern outfits, nor of the photographic or spectroscopic accessories inseparable from telescopes of to-day. We have made but passing reference to the results following all this construction. The tercentenary of the telescope as an instrument has been our subject. 'The invention of the 'telescope,' says Dr. Common, 'is to me the most beautiful 'ever made. Familiarity both in making and in using has only 'increased my admiration.'

Art. VI.—THE REFERENDUM.

Le Referendum : Histoire de la Législation Populaire en Suisse. Par Th. Curti. Traduite par Jules Ronjat. Edition française revue et augmentée d'un appendice par l'auteur. Paris : V. Giard et E. Brière. 1905.

The Referendum in Switzerland. By Simon Deploige. Translated into English by C. P. Trevelyan. Edited, with Notes, Introduction and Appendices, by Lilian Tomn. London : Longmans, Green and Co. 1898.

For some twenty years past a vague belief in the healing virtues of the Referendum has been growing in England. This is not unnatural : both parties have frankly accepted the democratic doctrine that the people's will must prevail in legislation, and would indignantly repudiate the bare suggestion of any furtive desire to obstruct popular demands. Old-time maxims, such as ' everything for the people, nothing by the ' people,' are not only dead, but buried. The people themselves best know what is good for them, and are entitled to get it. The people, however, have two rival sets of servants, each claiming to know exactly what the people want, and to be better able than the others to give effect to it. The only difficulty is to discover which of two competing remedies the people really want ; for on this point there are often acute differences of opinion. Here the advocates of the Referendum step boldly in : ' Refer the question to the people in their millions. Surely ' *they* know best what they really want. Let them answer ' " Yes " or " No." Those who claim to interpret their desires ' have thereafter an easy function to perform : a simple sum in ' addition and subtraction will always give an infallible index ' to the will of the nation on the most complicated questions that ' affect the national well-being. Nothing remains except to give ' effect to the majority's decision.' Ardent believers in a logical and thorough-going democracy, however, are not the only adherents of the Referendum. Friends of the principle of a Second Chamber find in the Referendum a means of averting the destruction with which the House of Lords is threatened, and of avoiding those recurring deadlocks which embitter the relations of the component parts of the Imperial British Parliament and threaten to engulf material prosperity in the throes of revolution. What Conservatives would accept as an additional bulwark against hasty legislation, Liberals hail as an effective weapon for hustling Bills through Parliament in spite of the

Lords' claim to act as a revising and suspending chamber. Professor Dicey and the chief Ministerial Whip, from opposite poles of politics, the one a foremost exponent of the academic standpoint, the other a master of party tactics, have both seriously considered the possibility of using the Referendum to settle the fate of the Finance Bill; while the 'Spectator' insists that another burning question of the hour, 'Votes for Women,' has only to be put to the touchstone of the Referendum in order to solve itself immediately to the satisfaction of all concerned. Business men also would welcome it as a speedy settlement of Budget and other uncertainties that interfere with trade. It is recommended further as a means of condemning a particular measure without turning adrift a Ministry whom the nation trusts; as a *via media* for Free Trade Conservatives who cannot conscientiously vote either for Tariff Reform or the present Budget; as an antidote to log-rolling; as a mode of making politics more honest and straightforward by disentangling the issues and preventing insincere mutual recriminations. It is praised as democratic in theory and conservative in practice; as capable of being introduced without dislocating existing relations or interfering with vested interests; and, in a word, as a universal panacea for all the admitted evils of our insular system of party government.

A reform backed by many leading publicists and statesmen of this country, and promising such desirable results, deserves to be treated with profound respect. Yet scepticism is a not unnatural attitude towards remedies for which their advertisers claim that they touch every spot with equal healing; and politicians, who are not inclined to scepticism, may well pause to enquire what exact place this plant of alien growth would occupy within the British Constitution; how the Referendum would work in practice; what obstacles would have to be overcome; and whether it might not produce results not anticipated by its advocates. Such is the enquiry to which this article proposes to address itself.

I.

The doctrines and practice of the British Constitution are often sharply contrasted: a reform that is simple and innocuous in theory might perhaps, when launched in the world of actual politics, be found to involve some hidden dangers. If so, the sooner the difficulties are faced, and if possible removed, the better. Now the advocates of the Referendum, who would introduce it into England, have never, it would seem, produced a detailed plan to show how the new addition is to be fitted on

to the existing framework of our ancient Constitution; nor have they even specified clearly which one or more of the numerous varieties of foreign expedients covered by the ambiguous name of Referendum they desire this country to adopt. Before making a detailed study of this interesting exotic in the lands that have produced it, it may be well to distinguish the four species that stand out most prominently as types of all the rest. These may be classified according to their constitutional effects.

1. One form of Referendum has no binding or legal effect at all, but is merely a method of ascertaining the popular opinion for the information of the Government. Educatively and morally the weight of such a vote may be great; but the Legislature remains legally unaffected by it, remains as free as it was before, either to ignore it or to give it partial or complete effect. This type, for which some prefer to reserve the name of plebiscite, may be called 'the Referendum as forming no part of the legislative machine,' and will be cited in this article as Referendum Number 1.

2. The Referendum may take the form of a power of veto conferred on the people, enabling them to defeat Bills already approved by both Chambers of their Parliament. Legislation thus becomes more difficult. The law-making machine practically consists of three Chambers—the Upper House, the Lower House, and the people at the polling booths—any one of which can wreck all attempts to change the law. The Referendum here becomes a powerful weapon of obstruction against the abuse of power by a despotic Parliament. The people's 'No' is all-powerful; but its 'Yes' is powerless to overcome the resistance of either House of Parliament. French theorists call this type 'Le Referendum de Correction.' It is 'the Referendum as a drag on the Legislature,' and may be cited shortly as Referendum Number 2.

3. The Referendum, however, may be used for an entirely opposite purpose. It may confer on the people a right to decide as arbiter between the conflicting decisions of the two branches of the Legislature. All Bills passed by one House—either House—and by the people become laws. Here the mass of voters again are made a third branch of Parliament, but this time only for positive purposes. Their 'Yes' becomes a legal weapon for compelling the reluctant House to surrender to the willing one. The opportunity of saying 'No' is entirely denied to them where both Houses are agreed. This form, known on the Continent as 'Le Referendum de Partage,' may be called 'the Referendum as an arbiter' or 'the Referendum as a spur to the Legislature,' and cited as Referendum Number 3.

4. Finally, the Referendum may be combined with the Popular Initiative, as that potent instrument of democracy exists in Switzerland. The people may not only frame Bills of their own (or compel an unwilling Legislature to perform this task for them), but may also compel the Legislature to declare that these Bills are laws, although both Houses strongly disapprove their tenor and have even previously voted their rejection. The people, whenever they care to exercise this option, may thus take a monopoly of the sovereign power into their own hands for the occasion, deposing both Chambers to make room for them. This form may be called 'the Referendum 'superseding both Houses of the Legislature,' or Referendum Number 4.

The Referendum, then, is not one thing, but four widely different groups of things, each of which must be further subdivided when brought face to face with practical requirements. There is, for example, the constitutional Referendum (reserved for changes in the framework of the body politic); the compulsory Referendum, allowing no alternative to the taking of a popular vote; and the facultative or optional Referendum, brought into play only on the signed demand of a specified number of registered voters. There is also the so-called Popular Veto, under which every voter who does not record his 'No' against a Bill is held to express approval of it. Numerous other subdivisions emerge when we try to find answers to questions such as these: When should the popular vote be taken, before or after discussion by the Legislature? How should it be taken? and what majority is required for acceptance or rejection? If British electors are not to be set the impossible task of voting on all Bills affecting every part of the Empire, who is to decide whether a vote is to be required or not? On all these points the Swiss cantons and the Swiss Federal State have proved veritable laboratories of political experiments for the benefit of the rest of Europe. Full details will be found in the admirable treatises of MM. Curti and Deploige, the first of which, professing to adopt an objective historic attitude, is an enthusiastic encomium on the Referendum as the only weapon, sufficiently potent, of a logical democracy; while the second retains a more critical but not unfairly hostile attitude. The People's Initiative also, which to M. Curti and others forms a logical and necessary supplement to the Referendum, takes various forms, as applied, for example, respectively to total or partial revisions of the Constitution; or according as a larger or smaller number of signatures are required to the Petition demanding its application. The so-called 'formu-'lated' Initiative is the most interesting variety of all; since

it enables any 50,000 Swiss voters to draw up their own Bills in any form they please, to obtain a vote of 'Yes' or 'No' from the whole nation, and to have their Bill, exactly as it stands, declared to be law, in the event of the answer being 'Yes.' The name Initiative would seem too mild a word to describe an institution which thus confers on any chance conglomeration of 50,000 voting units a right to exercise a power of framing laws equal to that of both Houses of Parliament combined, and enables them not only to originate Bills, but also, when backed by a majority of voters, to pass their Bills finally into laws in spite of the opposition of both Chambers of the Legislature.

II.

Englishmen in search of foreign models for the improvement of insular institutions will naturally turn to Switzerland, the cradle of the Referendum. When the cantons in the Middle Ages formed a federal alliance for mutual protection against powerful neighbours, the patriarchal hillmen, who had been accustomed to regulate their primitive affairs in their mass meetings or Landsgemeinden, were unwilling that their delegates to the Federal Diet should make laws without their own formal ratification. All questions unexpectedly mooted at the Diet were therefore 'referred back' to the separate cantons for further instructions. This system of cantonal Referendums was fully at work at least as early as the fifteenth century and remained in force till French influence substituted the 'Constitution of the Helvetic Republic' of April 12, 1798, for the old loose federal union. Four years later the Swiss people were summoned to ratify a new Constitution of May 20, 1802. A plebiscite was modelled on French precedents of 1793, the year III., and the year VIII. This was the first introduction into Switzerland of the Referendum in its modern form of an appeal to the massed votes of the people. The earlier Referendum had been to the separate cantons, not to the people voting all together. It was in the cantons, however, that the Referendum struck root deepest. In different forms it was adopted by St. Gall in 1831 and by Vaud in 1845. The Federal Constitution of 1848 affirmed the principle of the obligatory constitutional Referendum, conferring on the majority of the people and the majority of the cantons a right of veto over every proposed change in the Constitutions, both federal and cantonal; while it introduced, somewhat tentatively, the Initiative as a means of enabling any 50,000 voters to raise the question whether the Constitution should be revised or not. No machinery was yet devised, however,

for dictating to the Chambers of the Legislative Assembly the exact form such revision must assume. A fourfold line of defence was still preserved against a revolutionary or foolish use of the Initiative by requiring the concurrence in any proposed change of the two branches of the Legislature, of the majority of the massed voters, and of a majority of the twenty-two cantons. If the two Houses failed to agree on the terms of a new Constitution, there were apparently no means of constraining them ; the people had simply to do without the changes they desired. As yet, then, popular rights could only be used as a drag rather than as a spur. The Federal Constitution of 1874 marked a distinct advance. It maintained both the Initiative and the obligatory Referendum on all constitutional issues, and it introduced the facultative or optional Referendum (but not the Initiative) on all ordinary laws or decrees not declared ' urgent.' Under its terms any 30,000 voters may, by signed petition, demand that a Bill passed by both Houses should have to run the gauntlet of a popular vote before becoming law. The plea of urgency, however, was left as a convenient loophole for enabling the Legislative Chamber surreptitiously to remove contentious measures from the sphere of the Referendum altogether. All Budget Bills and treaties are systematically treated as ' urgent,' and thus escape from the Referendum, while the same plea was upheld, for example, in relation to so trivial a matter as a Bill fixing the site of a proposed national museum.

This Constitution of 1874 is still in force ; but has been modified, against the intentions of its framers, in the direction of more thorough-going popular legislation. This extension of the people's rights was the indirect consequence of an issue raised in 1879 as to whether the People's Initiative could or could not be used for a *partial* revision of the Constitution, or must be reserved for total revisions. The Federal Council ruled that amendments of separate articles could not be referred to the people without the entire framework of the Government being thrown into the crucible. This decision has been severely criticised as erroneous and illogical, but can be explained as the outcome of a not unnatural dread that to allow the Constitution to be altered in its isolated clauses would produce a motley patchwork, and might endanger the compromise between the central authority and the cantons on which the whole federal system was poised. The consequences of a Federal Decree of April 1891, practically reversing this decision, would seem amply to justify the earlier scruples of the Council. The Decree of that date, amending the Constitution in this respect, introduced

the 'formulated' Initiative for the first time, and allowed it (or alternatively the older form) to be used for partial revisions as well as total ones. The use actually made of this concession has been of a startling kind. By a sort of legal fiction, or by open connivance at an illegal evasion of the Constitution, it has become the regular practice to allow this constitutional Initiative to be applied to any legislative measures whatsoever, no matter how remote their substance may be from constitutional phenomena. Any Bill, if it only pretends to be a constitutional Bill—that is, if its framers couch it in the form of a constitutional article—may be forced through by means of the so-called constitutional Initiative. In this way a Bill, partly humanitarian but chiefly dictated by religious and racial intolerance against the Jews, was in 1893 initiated and completed. A law regulating the methods of slaughtering animals to be used for food thus forms an integral part of the Federal Constitution of Switzerland. This is no exceptional instance. The constitutional Initiative, indeed, is applied to ordinary legislation with increasing frequency. In 1908 it was used for introducing and carrying two Acts, one of which regulated the use of hydraulic power, and the other prohibited the manufacture and sale of absinthe throughout Switzerland; excellent laws both, but remote from the sphere of constitutional principle, and therefore unfit subjects for a proposed 'constitutional' Initiative.

A survey of the course taken by popular legislation in Switzerland and its cantons suggests two conclusions: the great variety of forms which the Referendum is capable of assuming, and the insinuating nature of the principle when once it has gained a footing. The people's appetite for legislation has grown with what it fed on. The milder forms were tried first, then a gradual advance set in, until the logical conclusion has been reached in the unfettered supremacy of the Initiative in all legislation in which the people care to assert themselves. The progress of the Initiative from the simple to the 'formulated' form, and from a restricted application to total revision, through partial revision, to a possible extension to laws of every kind is peculiarly noteworthy. The whole movement may possibly be viewed as a testimony to the virtues of a system that has proved its popularity by its steady advance. It may also, however, suggest awkward possibilities to admirers of a strictly limited Referendum who are not prepared to welcome the advent in its train of the drastic Swiss Initiative. The principle of the snowball may carry us too far if the snowball attains to the dimensions, momentum, and inevitableness of the Swiss avalanche. In Switzerland the people, by constantly extending the sphere

of the Referendum and Initiative, first established an equilibrium in legislation between their own power and that of the two Chambers of their Parliament, and then upset this equilibrium in their own favour, securing (whenever it so pleased them) the monopoly of law-making for themselves. By the overriding power of the Initiative in its later developments, all the careful restrictions raised around the proper province of the Referendum have been swept away. A general transformation has taken place of representative democracy into pure democracy, unqualified and unrestrained. The triumph of the Initiative over ordinary legislation, still a comparatively recent phenomenon in Switzerland, is the more remarkable when it is remembered that distinguished Swiss publicists who approve the Referendum are strongly opposed to the Initiative. M. Droz, for example, declares : *

> ' It is generally agreed in Switzerland that the popular Initiative, as it is now established by the Federal Constitution, might at any time place the country in very considerable danger. From the moment that the regular representatives of the people are placed in such a position that they have no more to say in the matter than an irresponsible committee drawing up articles in a bar-parlour, it is clear that the limits of sound democracy have been passed and that the reign of demagogy has begun.'

These hard words (which could readily be paralleled from the utterances of equally eminent continental jurists) are directed against the ' formulated ' Initiative, or Initiative by completed Bill. They form no argument, of course, against receiving the Referendum in this country as a guest, provided that the more dangerous members of the same family will not enter at the opened door.

It is unnecessary to give practical details of the machinery for taking the Referendum in Federal Switzerland and its separate cantons. It may be pointed out, however, that only in one set of circumstances, even in theory, is it possible for the Swiss Referendum to act as an arbiter between the two Houses of the Legislature, namely, where one Chamber on its own motion (without any petition or popular Initiative) proposes a total revision of the Constitution, and the other Chamber refuses to admit the necessity. Circumstances have never arisen, however, for putting this particular provision into play, and how it will act in practice may therefore be dismissed as pure matter of conjecture. Switzerland has had no practical experience of the form of Referendum Number 3 of this article, but

* *Contemporary Review*, p. 342, March 1895.

only of Numbers 2 and 4. It knows the Referendum as a veto or a drag which is compulsory for all constitutional Bills, and facultative for all ordinary ones; and it knows also the Referendum combined with the Initiative which may or may not proceed by way of formulated Bill, and may now be applied to measures of every sort (even those reserved from the operation of the ordinary and conservative Referendum). Switzerland, it will be seen, affords no model for using the people's direct vote as a means of settling quarrels between Lords and Commons. When the Swiss people use their Initiative, they do so not to compel one House to bow to the other, but to sweep both Houses from their path so that they may legislate for themselves.

English statesmen who are looking for guidance to the experience of Switzerland must also make adequate allowance for the wide divergence between the circumstances and characters of the two nations, and between their respective systems of government. Mere difference in the size of their respective territories is, perhaps, a minor point. Yet the very possibility that the Referendum may one day be extended to all the imperial interests of the British Dominions is a danger to be kept in mind. The regulation of slaughter-houses in Switzerland or the issue of Federal bank notes are questions simpler and less dangerous for masses of ignorant voters to deal with than are the complicated issues of the proper treatment of Indian or Chinese labour in South Africa or the adjustment of tariffs between the Mother Country and Australia or Canada. The mere contrast in the number of Bills that annually become law in the two countries cannot be disregarded in view of the difficulty experienced even by scholars like M. Droz in reading the text of all the measures on which they are required to vote. In Switzerland, the more honest class of electors abstain from voting on Bills they have not had time to read; the ignorant or dishonest vote as they are told by interested agitators. In Switzerland, again, the party system does not exist—in the strict English sense at least, which involves the constant alliance of the Commons' majority with the Ministers of the Crown, and the solidarity of Cabinets that have to quit office collectively in face of a hostile vote in the Lower Chamber. Members of both Chambers of the Federal Assembly, or Swiss Legislature, are frequently voted for by political opponents. It is a common saying that 'there is no need to dismiss a man 'because you disagree with him.' The people often reject laws referred to them by their representatives, and yet return the bulk of the same members to the next Federal Assembly. Ministers, again, never think of resigning when their measures

are rejected by the Legislature or by the people. A threat to do so has even been denounced as 'unconstitutional.' The Swiss system of direct popular interference in legislation, then, may be better or worse than the British system of party government: it is, at least, radically different. The Referendum is an inherent part of a peculiar system suited to the genius of the Swiss. It has grown with the growth of their Federal Republic, of which it forms an organic part. The Swiss are as proud of their system of popular government as the English are of their essentially different representative system. If adopted in England, the Referendum would either remain something alien and unassimilated, or else it would permeate and leaven the whole mass, until the British Constitution had become either a copy of that of Switzerland or something midway between the two. Other vital points of contrast must be hurried over. The centralised unitary system of the British Parliament with its famed 'legislative omnipotence' is the very antithesis of the Swiss federal system, under which each district has a separate cantonal life of its own; where the work of legislation is divided between the central and the local assemblies; and where the cantonal sovereignty acts as a wholesome restraint on the sovereignty of the majority of the citizens all massed together.

The relations of the two Houses of Assembly, again, are radically different from those of Lords and Commons. The Swiss Chambers are strictly co-ordinate in authority, with equal powers in finance as in all other matters. The Referendum (so far, at least, as it is not combined with the dangerous Initiative) does not act, and was never meant to act, as an arbiter between the Chambers. It is never used, and was not meant to be used, as a means of overcoming the resistance of one Chamber. The people must, on all constitutional questions (and may, if they like, on any other question), form a third Chamber of the Legislature—so far, at least, as voting goes. The Referendum is a means of making legislation more difficult, not easier. In brief, the Referendum, as it exists in Switzerland, is a different and even an opposite thing from the Referendum desired by the advocates of change in England. The analogy completely breaks down. It is quite true that the Initiative enables the people to overrule not one but both Chambers of the Legislature; but no one has yet proposed, even in jest apparently, that the Initiative should be introduced into the United Kingdom.

Special features of the political life of Switzerland that have counteracted some of the most dangerous tendencies of the Referendum can only be glanced at here. Large portions of

the sphere of legislation have been carefully fenced off. No Budget or treaty, as we have seen, is ever submitted to the people; and the two Houses may by agreement withdraw any Bill whatever from the operation of the Referendum by declaring it to be 'urgent'—a back-door of escape from the control of the sovereign people which has frequently been found useful. Yet, in spite of all restraints and safeguards, the Referendum has not proved an unqualified success in Switzerland. Native opinion is sharply divided on its merits and defects. Its moderate admirers admit that among its faults must be noted the popular apathy that has led some cantons to make voting compulsory under penalties; the difficulty of supplying the voters with unbiased information in any form they can be got to read; the pernicious activity of agitators; the danger of recording votes without opportunities of previous discussion; and, above all, the lowering of the sense of responsibility among the legislators. If these evils are felt in little Federal Switzerland, would they be likely to be mitigated or intensified by the conditions that prevail in Imperial Britain?

What effect would the introduction of the Referendum have upon the doctrine of ministerial responsibility? Would the British Cabinet continue to admit a collective responsibility to the Commons? or would it transfer its allegiance to the power behind the Commons, which had been given a legal right to throw out measures which the Commons had framed and approved? The experiment would be one of intense and thrilling interest; but he will be a bold statesman on whose authority it is made.

III.

The attempts at direct popular legislation made in the Commonwealth of Australia and in America must be more briefly treated. Indeed, the recent date of the introduction of the Referendum into the former, and the absence of any up-to-date treatise, at once comprehensive and authoritative, as to its working in the various States and municipalities of the latter, make it unprofitable to attempt to draw generalisations for the guidance of this country. Neither the Referendum nor the Initiative holds any place in the Federal Constitution of the United States of America; but both have been adopted in the written Constitutions of certain individual States and municipalities. The Referendum first found favour in America as a necessary preliminary to the adoption of new State Constitutions. As early as 1778, for example, the township meetings of

Massachusetts refused to ratify a new Constitution submitted for their approval. In the following year a popular vote confirmed the proposal that a Convention should meet to frame the Federal Constitution, and the final code was ratified in 1780 by a majority of more than the required two-thirds. The Referendum is now recognised as necessary for all changes in the Constitution of every individual State—with the exception of Delaware. So far, we have merely a form of the Referendum as a drag (our Referendum Number 2), and that restricted to one special purpose, to which no parallel exists in England. Its usefulness was soon extended, however. The peculiar temptations of American politics made it imperative that the people should be protected against the extravagance and peculation of their representatives in the local Legislatures.

An ingenious device, once hit upon, was soon widely adopted, of including in the framework of State Constitutions all questions which the members of the Legislatures could not be trusted to deal with. By extending these Constitutions the popular veto was also extended. It was a natural sequel to provide that a Referendum should also be taken on certain questions which could not conveniently be included in the articles of the Constitution, such as the power to spend public money or to pledge the public credit. Its necessity and value in America are thus consequences in great measure of the corrupt conditions of public life. Of late years, however, strenuous exertions have been made towards extending its use beyond its originally strictly limited field of action, and also to supplement it by the introduction of the Initiative on the Swiss model—another illustration of the insinuating nature of popular legislation. Since 1896 the Initiative has formed a plank in the platform of the Populist party ; while in 1902 the People's Power League succeeded in obtaining for the people of Oregon the right to initiate Bills by petition—a right that has been freely taken advantage of. In the absence of authoritative information on the results of popular legislation in the various States, it is impossible to refer to the example of America, either as an encouragement or as a warning to England ; the wide differences between the two countries are not likely to be forgotten. None of the States adopting these expedients has a sovereign legislative body like the British Parliament. All of them are subjected to the restraints implied in the existence of a rigid Constitution and also to the control in certain directions both of the Federal Congress and of the Federal Constitution. All analogies between such contrasted phenomena are misleading. One fact is specially worthy of note, however ; the apathy of the electors in not troubling to

record their votes is one of the features in which America resembles Switzerland.

Ten or twenty years hence, priceless lessons will probably be forthcoming, for the guidance of Great Britain, from the experiments of Australia in popular legislation. Meanwhile it is too soon to do more than note what reforms in that direction have been initiated, leaving time to ripen their fruits. The Commonwealth Constitution, itself confirmed by a Referendum to the six separate States or Colonies, embodies two forms of the Referendum in its provisions for its own amendment. Changes in the framework require to be passed by absolute majorities of both Chambers of the Commonwealth Legislature, and then to be submitted to a popular vote which requires an absolute majority of the voters and also a majority of States. The people of any three Colonies combined might thus defeat it. This is again the Referendum as a drag. On the other hand, if one House has twice passed an amendment which the other House has twice refused, a Referendum must be taken on the original proposal together with any alterations that the other House thinks good to submit. This is the Referendum as an arbiter (or Referendum Number 3), strictly limited, however, to constitutional revision. A proposal made while the Constitution was being framed that all disputes over ordinary Bills (including money Bills) should be settled by Referendum was rejected after full consideration.

The history of the movement in Queensland may also be profitably considered, since the reasons which led to its adoption there bear some analogy to reasons urged at present in England for its adoption here. An acute political crisis occurred in 1908. Mr. Kidston, the Premier, had carried through the Legislative Assembly a Bill extending the provisions of the Wages Board to agricultural labourers. The Legislative Council (or Queensland Upper House) twice rejected this, and Mr. Kidston proposed to swamp the hostile majority of the Upper House by the creation of new members. Lord Chelmsford, the Governor, refused to take this step, although advised to it by the Ministers responsible for the government of the Colony. The Premier resigned, triumphed in the new election, and carried what was practically a vote of censure on the Governor. Possible parallels with the course of home politics do not need to be insisted on. To prevent a recurrence of such deadlocks for the future a Referendum Bill was carried through both Chambers, and received the Royal Assent. Measures twice rejected by the Council will in future be submitted to the decision of the qualified Queensland voters. Here at last we find a clear instance of

Referendum Number 3. Unfortunately we have still no means of knowing how it is destined to work in practice.

IV.

The United Kingdom, if it adopts the Referendum, must do so mainly on *à priori* grounds ; as it cannot found on the experience of any body politic whose circumstances are at all analogous to its own. So far as theory goes, the doctrinaire politician may well argue that the proposed experiment would be thoroughly in accord with the modern belief in ' triumphant democracy.' The people—which for all practical purposes means the majority —have an absolute right to get anything they want, including a fair share—of the extent of which they are sole judges—of the surplus wealth monopolised by the minority. They know best what legislative measures are good for them, and what is the best form these should take. The will of the people has an admitted right to prevail, and that without question or unnecessary delay. This, it may be argued, is the doctrine professed (whether honestly or dishonestly) by all candidates for the suffrages of the people. It is an axiom or truism of modern political life. Now, the Referendum is the only logical embodiment of that doctrine ; for who can profess to know better what the people want than the people themselves ? England, they say, is already a democracy ; let us honestly face the fact and prefer a consistent orderly democracy to an insincere, capricious one. At this point, however, two caveats may be hazarded : England, in the first place, is at present a representative democracy, not a pure democracy—a very different thing ; while, in the second place, even in a pure democracy it may be wise for the people to employ skilled legislators to work for them, instead of doing the work clumsily and ignorantly for themselves in their scanty moments of leisure. Our representative system, besides, is still tempered by a liberal admixture of monarchic and aristocratic elements which, interpreted in the spirit of reverence for tradition which characterises English statesmanship, go far to preserve the ancient features of a Constitution which used to be described as ' mixed,' meaning by that word that it was a blend of monarchic, aristocratic, and democratic elements. The Executive still acts in the name of the Crown, while the Legislature preserves the form of the King's Parliament of the three estates. The change to a pure democracy might be a good thing or a bad thing ; it is wrong to argue that it would be no change at all. The change proposed is not merely

from a veiled to an open democracy, but also from a tempered to an undiluted one.

It may be asked, with equal point, whether the true principles of a wise democratic doctrine demand that the people must actually frame their own laws, or that the innumerable clauses and complicated administrative details of a modern Bill must be submitted to their ignorant judgement? Legislation is, or ought to be, an exact science, the mastery of which cannot possibly be acquired by men who have to make their livings as miners, doctors, or greengrocers. Is it fair to expect busy men even to read through numerous Bills? Is it safe to let them vote on details they have never read? How far is it possible or desirable that the members of the ordinary Legislature should take the mass of voters into partnership with them? Ought they to allow their own handiwork to be superseded by Bills drawn up by chance combinations of voters who have never met to discuss the details? To answer such questions fully it would be necessary to enunciate a complete theory of legislation, which is obviously beyond the limit of an article. Yet the two objects of an ideal law-making machine might be provisionally stated thus: To promote expeditiously all measures required by the national welfare, without inflicting unnecessary hardship on individuals. How far would the substitution of the Referendum for either or for both of the Houses of Parliament promote these aims? If used to overcome the resistance of the Lords, the Referendum would obviously promote the first object in the eyes of Liberal statesmen; but would it equally protect the rights of individuals and minorities, and thereby promote the sense of security on which national prosperity in the long run depends? James Mill, in a once famous article, declared that the entire Theory of Government centred round one problem: How to set limits to the authority of the supreme power in a State. In England to-day the supreme power lies in the sovereign people. The rule of the majority—of the odd vote, perhaps—is the only tyrant that need be feared at the present day. Other powers may obstruct, indeed, but cannot play the active despot. The House of Lords, or even the Crown, might delay or defeat proposals for change; but it is not easy to imagine circumstances in which either of these powers could usurp an active control over the machinery of legislation, and force measures upon the nation that the nation did not want. The vital question thus arises, how far the substitution of the Referendum, entirely or partially, for the present legislative sovereignty of Parliament would strengthen or weaken the minority's means of resistance to the threatened tyranny of the many. Any one who attempts

to answer this question for himself will do well to bear in mind that the interests of the minority of to-day may be more nearly identical with those of the majority of to-morrow than with those of the majority of to-day. Thrift, for example, the economic virtue that creates future capital out of present revenue, is a quality of the few rather than of the many.

In passing from abstract theory to a consideration of the practical difficulties that might attend the introduction of the Referendum into England, two of the four forms already distinguished may be dismissed as outside the sphere of present-day British politics. No responsible statesman contemplates the immediate possibility of adopting the Referendum either in form Number 2 or in form Number 4 ; there is no intention, that is to say, either to add the people, armed with a right of veto, as a third Chamber of Parliament, nor to enable the people to supersede both Chambers after the manner of the Swiss Popular Initiative. The issues at stake are thus somewhat narrowed. In dismissing these forms of the Referendum, however, we must take care not to transfer their characteristics, either as matter for praise or censure, to the two widely different forms that remain. The eminently conservative qualities of the Referendum as a drag, for example, must not be attributed to the Referendum when used as a spur ; nor must the compelling power of the Initiative cast discredit on the milder forms under consideration.

The Plebiscitary Referendum, aiming merely at collecting information, which once collected has no binding force or legal authority whatsoever, already exists in England, and is used by Trades Unions before beginning or terminating strikes, and by municipalities on such questions as the adoption of the Free Libraries Act. There would be no insurmountable difficulty in having a similar ballot by all the electors of the United Kingdom on any important question—provided always that Parliament sanctions the necessary expense. Does the nation desire Tariff Reform or does it not ? If the electors would only view the proposed plebiscite seriously and take the trouble to record their votes on that single issue, it would be easy to collect the information desired. It is, perhaps, some such popular poll as this (carrying no binding or legal effect in its train) that some of the advocates of the Referendum have in mind when they suggest it as a ready solution of the burning questions of the day. Yet it is difficult to see what good purpose would really have been effected by such a vote, after all the turmoil and expense had been incurred. If the general principle were held as decided, the details of any consequent legislation would still remain to be wrangled over. Endless objections, evasions, and delays would

still be possible, even if one branch of the Legislature did not boldly repudiate the vote as having no legal authority, and carrying no moral weight—on the plausible ground, for example, that the popular vote had not been a full or representative one. The abstaining voters, it might be urged, showed their tacit opposition by not making their ballot in favour of the proposed change. Further, whenever such an expedient came to be admitted to a permanent and recognised place in our Constitution, practical difficulties would arise in abundance. Answers must be found to questions such as these: On what classes of laws shall the plebiscite be taken?—for it would be impossible to take it on all. Shall its sphere be defined by law, or left to the discretionary authority of the Cabinet, or of one or both Houses of Parliament; or shall so many hundreds of thousands of voters have the right to demand it on petition? Shall the reference be made before or after the measure has been discussed in Parliament? How shall the votes be taken? What majority is required for either Yes or No? Any one who sets out to answer these questions will find himself involved in a network of difficulties, not necessarily insurmountable, but yet requiring to be honestly faced.

The difficulties that meet the advocates of the Referendum in its other practicable form—those who would give the people's 'Yes' legal power to override the opposition of the Lords—are partly the same and partly different. The difficulty of determining in what cases the popular vote should be resorted to would seem at first sight not to arise. Let all Bills, it may be said, on which the Houses have failed to agree, be made the subject of a reference. Nothing could be simpler. Two methods suggest themselves. An Act of Parliament might direct that here, as in Queensland, every Bill rejected a second time by the Upper Chamber must immediately go before the people. Alternatively, the Prime Minister, or the Commons' majority, might be given discretionary authority to take a popular vote on a definite issue when deemed necessary. The results would be identical in practice; every controversial Bill on which the Lords showed fight would be quickly referred to the electors. The Commons, conscious of this compelling power behind them, would discard all spirit of compromise. The Upper House would soon be cowed into a due habit of unquestioning submission. It would be made a crime to incur unnecessarily the turmoil and expense of a Referendum. The Commons, no longer apprehensive of a General Election, would incur no risk in pressing their claims to the utmost. 'There lies our Bill,' they would say to the Lords, 'take it or leave it as it stands. Extreme, crude, one-'sided, unjust as you may think it, it is the only Bill you will get

'from us. If you refuse, we can simply proceed without you.' The revising Chamber would revise no longer. The House of Lords would be dead, for all practical purposes. The English Legislature would not consist, like the Swiss, of two Chambers and the people, but only of one Chamber and the people.

The Referendum, moreover, could never take the place of a revising Chamber, since by its means discussion is impossible, amendment is impossible, compromise is impossible. All measures must be accepted or rejected exactly as they stand. The Commons may be imagined saying to the people—'Will 'you have this ancient institution painted a brilliant coat 'of scarlet, or must it remain for ever of its present shade of 'shabby sombre grey? Do you vote for the change proposed? 'Answer a simple Yes or No.' Three millions of registered voters, and the odd man who holds the balance, answer 'Yes'; the other three millions (*minus* the odd man), preferring the safer and more dingy grey, say 'No.' Flaming scarlet is then held to be the exact expression of the people's will. Yet the people might have preferred, if they had only had the chance, some modified colour scheme equally pleasing to the 3,000,001 voters, yet not outraging the feelings of the 2,999,999 who prefer the *status quo*. The Referendum could not perform the function of the House of Lords it had destroyed, for it knows nothing of compromise, that healing doctrine that has proved the safeguard and the pivot of the British Constitution in the past. Many a bad Bill would become law, because the voters thought it somewhat better than none at all. The electors, with no means of making their real wishes known to the dominant House of Commons, would be reduced to choosing between whatever crude alternatives were placed before them.

While freeing the Commons' House from the restraining influence of a revising Chamber, the Referendum would also lower the sense of responsibility. If the people are allowed directly to participate in the work of legislation, there is the less necessity for their representatives to burden themselves on their behalf. An ignorant master, with power to overrule the expert opinion of his skilled servants, is a master rather to be humoured than advised for his own good. This is the gravest objection to the Referendum in the eyes of many thoughtful politicians, who might otherwise feel inclined to favour it. It would be difficult to fix anywhere the responsibility for legislative measures. The centre of gravity of the law-making machinery would be moved from the floor of the House of Commons to the polling booths. The sense of responsibility, which varies in inverse ratio to the number who share it, would disappear

entirely when divided among the six millions of active British electors.

Numerous minor objections to the Referendum need only to be named in passing, such as the expense and unsettlement caused by constantly recurrent general elections in miniature, in which (when all is said) the real issues might not be really narrowed down to the nominal one; the loss of dignity to the House of Commons, now become a mere consultative committee from which the sovereignty has passed elsewhere; and the impossibility of verifying signatures in England, if a facultative Referendum were established on Swiss models. The probable effects of the Referendum in increasing the authority of Trades Unions, political caucuses, faddists, and professional agitators would also require to be considered. These are only a few of the aspects of the subject which seem to require fuller treatment than they have yet received, but which cannot be here fully discussed. One consequence of the suggested reform, however, demands special attention: the Referendum, if it comes into general use, will require to be accompanied by some form of Home Rule. This necessity becomes evident in considering questions on which the interests of Scotland, Wales, or Ireland differ from those of England. Would it be fair to refer a suggestion to establish a Roman Catholic University in Ireland, or to disestablish the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, to a mass vote dominated by English Episcopalians? If the clauses of a Licensing Bill are thought to bear more hardly on Scotch and Irish whisky than on English beer, is the vote of the predominant partner to swamp that of its poorer neighbours? It would be absurd, again, for the same electorate to enact two Small Holdings Acts founded on essentially different principles for England and for the lowlands of Scotland respectively. To avoid such possibilities, it would be necessary to classify all Bills that were to be put to the popular vote into Imperial measures on the one hand, and English, Scotch, Welsh, or Irish on the other—a weighty and delicate task with which some new or old constitutional organ would have to be entrusted. Home Rule, with all its advantages, difficulties, and dangers, thus follows in the footsteps of the Referendum. Those who deny this will gain nothing by pointing to the experience of Switzerland, for Switzerland has always been a federal Republic, in which every canton, municipality, dizain, and commune enjoys a wide measure of local autonomy. The Referendum and Home Rule go hand in hand.

V.

Advocates of the Referendum ask, however, that its merits should be tested by application to actual concrete problems as they arise; they maintain that it is well suited to solve two burning questions of the day—the Finance Bill and the enfranchisement of women. The latter is specially selected by the 'Spectator' as a suitable test case. Let us accept it as such, and try to picture how the suggested remedy would actually work. An initial difficulty is that the militant ladies would accept the decision of the electorate only if it gave them what they wanted. The Referendum would be to them an arbiter whose 'Yes' would be accepted and its 'No' rejected. Opponents of 'votes for 'women' might see no object in a reference on such terms. Women, again, might argue not unfairly that to submit the question to the existing male electorate would be to admit the justice of the *status quo*; while to allow women to share in the plebiscite would be illogical for any one not prepared to concede the whole point in dispute. Franchise questions would thus seem to be peculiarly unsuited for the arbitrament of the Referendum. Suppose, however, that these preliminary objections have been waived, how is the machinery to be set in motion? As the female suffrage question was not formally before either House of Parliament last session, a Referendum would not have been effected even by a statute referring to the people all disputes between Lords and Commons. A discretionary authority vested in the Cabinet would also have failed to act, if Mr. Asquith had shown himself as reluctant to order a Referendum as to receive deputations of fair petitioners. The right to demand a plebiscite might, indeed, be vested in some Parliamentary Committee. If, as would be natural, the Government commanded a majority of votes in this body, a solution would be as far off as ever; while the position of Committeemen who persisted in saying 'No' in spite of the attentions of enthusiastic reformers might be an invidious one in the most peaceable of times. Quicker progress might be made, indeed, if a given number of electors had the right by signed petition to demand a Referendum. The difficulties of verifying signatures, however, great even in little Switzerland, would be greater here. These considerations by no means exhaust the obstacles to be overcome. The application of the Referendum to the question of female enfranchisement participates in all the general difficulties of the expedient, and has, in addition, special difficulties of its own.

Take now the other question suggested as a test—the Budget. Undoubtedly Money Bills require separate consideration; for

all sound Liberals contend that in finance the British sovereign Legislature, according to conventions of the Constitution, is, and ought to be, a one-Chambered Parliament; while Conservatives admit that any powers of controlling finance still reserved to the House of Lords are exceptional in their nature and not to be exercised under normal circumstances. Putting the Upper House aside, the Commons (allied as they must be with the Cabinet) are legally omnipotent in finance. The Legislative sovereignty distributed for ordinary measures among King, Lords, and Commons is for Bills whose object is to raise revenue collected into one hand. Finance, too, is likely to bulk more prominently in the future than in the past; for all modern problems, whether concerning old-age pensions, Tariff Reform, or Socialism, are financial in their essence. Is it wise to leave this energetic, all-pervading one-Chambered taxing-machine to the unfettered exercise of its omnipotence? Ought not the people, by means of the Referendum, to control the people's Chamber, claiming sovereignty in the people's name? Full answers to such questions would involve consideration of the theory of taxation in general and of the history of Parliament as the taxing-machine of England.

Control over taxation is of the very essence of the life of Parliament. The powers of the Commons were gradually built up by a wise insistence on the doctrine that 'redress of 'grievances ought to have precedence of the grant of supplies,' called by Hallam the mainspring of our Constitution; while the maxim that 'taxation and representation must always 'go together' has been the most fertile root of constitutional progress. Both principles took their rise in the Middle Ages from the need of protecting the subjects' rights from aggression by the ruling powers. The sovereign was then the king, and is now the people. Yet the need for protection is not less but greater; for to-day money is taken from the subjects' pockets not merely to defray the expenses of administration and the extravagance of courts, but for readjusting the economic relations between those who have superfluous wealth and those who have too little. The sphere of legislative activity has thus extended greatly, and is still extending. These formidable and penetrating powers are wielded unrestrained by the sovereign Legislature, and the sovereign Legislature tends to become the Commons' House alone. One Chamber, it is said, might even redistribute the wealth of the nation among its various citizens, and advocates of the Referendum think that this is a power too great for any single body of men, however wise, disinterested, and representative, to exercise unrestrained. They

maintain that the people ought to be able to restrain them by a vote of the majority on a definite issue.

Neither this suggestion, nor the considerations it arises from, can be lightly passed over. Even granting that some security is required against an unfair or dangerously large proportion of the property of one class of subjects being distributed among another class, without unduly hampering the Government in raising the supplies it deems necessary for defence, administration, and philanthropy, we have to ask ourselves how far does the Referendum give us what we want? There is here ample room for more opinions than one; but the following arguments are adduced towards showing that the Referendum, while leaving minorities entirely unprotected, would yet render it difficult or impossible for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to meet the annual expenditure.

To transfer the ultimate control of finance from the House of Commons to the people at the polling booths would be only to intensify the evils complained of, while introducing new evils of another kind. The central reservoir into which the whole wealth of England is at present made to flow would be placed at the disposal of any one who obtained, from a majority of voters, permission to draw it out. Who is to determine how much of a man's income or property he may keep for himself, and how much he must give to others? The responsibility for deciding this can be, with somewhat less danger, left to the Commons than transferred to the people. If the present scheme of representation in the Lower Chamber does not adequately protect the minority against the majority, the danger is not to be removed by abolishing representative government altogether. The old maxim about 'representation and 'taxation' which protected the taxpayer against the king, if properly applied to modern conditions, might require, indeed, that earners of large incomes, part of whose earnings are to be distributed, ought to be more fully represented than needy citizens between the ages of sixty and seventy (let us say) who are anxious to have the system of old-age pensions extended to themselves. The Referendum, however, the embodiment of the triumph of majorities over minorities, would afford taxpayers no adequate protection; while it would increase enormously the financial difficulties of carrying on the King's Government.

Imagine the perplexities that would surround a Chancellor of the Exchequer planning Budgets to be annually submitted for the approval of the electorate! One question that would trouble him at first, indeed, would soon be set at rest: Would the Budget's rejection mean that the Cabinet must resign?

To believe the contrary is hardly possible; no self-respecting Government would submit to the humiliation of having a series of Budgets rejected one after another. The very suggestion of such a possibility would imply a complete disruption of the whole system of party government. Further, if the registered voters, in deciding the fate of successive Finance Acts, were invited to vote apart altogether from party ties, they would oppose *every* tax that bore hardly on themselves. If voting took place on selfish, personal lines, it seems doubtful (since no one really enjoys paying taxes) whether a Chancellor of the Exchequer could ever devise a Budget so popular as to run the gauntlet. Ministers, therefore (even if constitutionally considered free to retain office), would be compelled in self-defence to threaten to resign as the only means of getting their Finance Bills past the Referendum. This would maintain the old party system in full vigour indeed, but would defeat one of the main objects of the proposed reform. The electors would vote annually on the old tangled issues, not on the single issue (if indeed it is possible to speak of a modern Budget as confined only to one issue). Each annually recurring Referendum would have the effect of a vote of confidence or no-confidence, like a general election.

Yet the conditions would be infinitely more disadvantageous for a harassed Chancellor of the Exchequer. Grumbling taxpayers would break away from party constraint. The party Whips may compel members of Parliament to vote straight; but they would have no control over aggrieved electors who had failed, after repeated deputations, to make the Chancellor of the Exchequer agree to such reasonable requests as theirs. The bolder voters whose businesses were injured by an unjust tax (imposed in spite of warnings and remonstrances) would march in trade processions to the polls. The mean voter would chuckle as he silently dropped his veto in the ballot-box. Even income-tax payers might then make their voices heard, or wreck successive Governments until they were.

If the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in despair, broke up his Finance Bill into sections (reverting to the system put an end to by Mr. Gladstone in 1861) he would land himself in new difficulties. Only Bills which taxed weak minorities would become laws; politics would become an immoral game of interests, principle would be nowhere. The annually recurring dread of a vote of no-confidence would have as unsettling an effect on the mind of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as on the trade of the country. It would result in timid finance and in unfair finance; it would be necessary to give way before the clamours of the obstreperous

many, and to thrust the unwelcome burden of taxation on those least able to resist. Considerations such as these make it easy to understand why all measures of a financial nature have been absolutely excluded in Switzerland from the operation of the Referendum.

The case would thus seem a strong one against attaching the Referendum to Parliament as a regular part of the machinery of taxation. It has still to be asked, however, whether it would not be possible to hold it in reserve to be used only in times of crisis, whether caused by Money Bills or by ordinary legislation. A medicine, dangerous when used as our daily food, may yet give relief upon occasion, if the danger of 'habit-forming' can be sufficiently guarded against. If some *deus ex machinâ* could suddenly descend at the critical moment, carry through a Referendum, and then remove himself with his machinery, leaving the Constitution exactly as it had been before, many of the suggested evils (particularly in matters of finance) would not occur.

Is it not possible so to alter the British Constitution as to allow of a Referendum being taken in grave emergencies without permanent dislocation of existing relations or traditions? That is a question which invites most serious consideration by statesmen. We have thought it right to protest against any rash and premature attempt to graft the Referendum on to our insular system of representative institutions, without previously calculating the cost. Once granted as a regular part of the Constitution, the Referendum can never be recalled. Its sphere of influence may gradually extend. It may bring in its train other logical developements of direct legislation by the people, ending in the complete triumph of the Initiative as in Switzerland. The onus would seem to lie on the advocates of the Referendum of proving that it is possible to prevent the popular appetite for direct interference in the work of legislation from growing with what it feeds on; for the only form in which the Referendum is likely to recommend itself to responsible English statesmen is as an exceptional remedy to be strictly held in reserve for exceptional emergencies. The questions involved cannot be lightly passed over, for they touch the gravest issues of political science and the national well-being.

Art. VII.—THE TYRANNY OF THE NILE.

1. *Le Nil à l'Époque Pharaonique, son rôle et son culte en Egypte.* Par Charles Palanque. Paris : Librairie Emile Bouillon. 1903.
2. *The Nearer East.* By D. G. Hogarth, M.A. London : Heinemann. 1902.
3. *La Nouvelle Egypte.* Par A. B. de Guerville. Paris : Librairie Universelle. 1905.
4. *Life in Ancient Egypt and Assyria.* By G. Maspero. Translated by Alice Morton. London : Chapman and Hall. 1892.

In a recent number of this Review* there appeared an article dealing with Egyptian art in which it was sought to show that the limitations apparent in the art of Egypt were limitations also in the life and thought of Egypt. Egyptian art is archaic in conception, but at the same time it is perfect in execution. The combination is unusual. Rudeness of execution and rudeness of conception generally go together, for people who get beyond the rudimentary stage in execution—who attain, that is, to delicacy and refinement of execution—have, as a rule, got beyond the rudimentary stage in conception also. By the time they have attained perfect manual skill and dexterity they have attained also to some knowledge in the art of representation. So when we are confronted with a group obviously archaic in conception, made up of childishly impossible figures, attitudes, and features, we instinctively look for and expect a corresponding deficiency in the execution department. But although in the matter of conception Egyptian art remains fixed and immovable in the archaic stage, there is nothing archaic in its actual execution. This is perfect. It is not the hand that is not. The practice of centuries in doing the same thing over and over again has trained this to complete ductility. It is the mind, the guiding intelligence, which should lead the way, and which among all progressive races does lead the way, out of the archaic stage of developement, which is at fault. This refuses to lead, and so, for Egyptian art, no advance is possible. From this strange combination of intellectual apathy with consummate craftsmanship there ensues the changelessness we know of. Unled by thought, Egyptian art can never escape the archaic rut. It is unable to develope, but on the other hand it is not subject to

* *Edinburgh Review*, October 1909, 'Limitations of Egyptian Art.'

decay, for it cannot attain the phase of ripeness which makes decay a natural process. Perfect yet primitive, young yet very old, its hoary infancy defies time. It is the image of routine, of the deadly monotony of an unthinking iteration.

And in this Egyptian art is the picture of Egyptian life in all its aspects. Everything in Egypt attains a certain level of child-like proficiency, but nothing surpasses that level. Religion, literature, science, medicine, mathematics, agriculture, in none is there scarcely a trace of any forward movement, or developement beyond a point reached ages since in a remote antiquity. 'The grasp in which Egyptian art is held—the iron grasp of an 'immemorial usage—is a grasp which also controls Egyptian 'life in all its activities.' Such was the conclusion arrived at. Egyptian art reflects the life that bore it. It reflects the mental stagnation of that life and it reflects also its habit of accustomed and perpetual repetition. If the reader be inclined to suggest certain qualifications to arguments here necessarily baldly and briefly stated, he will nevertheless, we believe, agree with their main outline and intention, since it is impossible to examine any of the records and remains which have come down to us, of whatever sort they be, of Egypt's civilisation without being struck by the fact that that civilisation in all its aspects was nothing but a repetition by rote of primitive processes. The immobility of all Egyptian sciences, their total lack of any principle of growth and developement, is so marked a characteristic in them that we may, perhaps, assume the reader's recognition of its presence.

But having got thus far it is difficult to stop. It is difficult to realise the curt and definite character of these limitations without being led to wonder at and inquire into their possible cause. Why did the Egyptian mind move for ever in the same narrow round? Why did it never for a moment shake off the ancient tyranny of custom and routine which kept it pinned to the archaic? Such questions must occur to all of us who give our attention to the subject, but they will occur with particular force to those of us who have studied Egyptian art and history in Egypt itself. For those who have so studied have had an opportunity of noticing a similarity not easily ignored. They have examined the figures of Egyptian sculpture petrified for ever in attitudes of naïve and childish simplicity, and then, looking round them, they have seen the same strange simplicity echoed by Nature herself and governing the very construction of the country. Running all through the compositions of Egyptian art they have noticed the authority of a perpetual routine. Running through the land of Egypt before their very eyes is a power which, ever since the country was created, has held in a similar

routine the lives of its inhabitants. The art and civilisation of Egypt seem cast in the same mould as the country itself. It may be possible to exaggerate the significance of such a similarity; it may be difficult exactly to define its meaning and influence; but that it exists, that it has significance and that it is worth some thought and attention, we believe no one will deny.

There is in Egypt, studded along the river banks, a kind of pump, known as the 'shayduf,' which never fails to attract the visitor's attention. It is entirely in keeping in its simplicity with Egyptian traditions, for it consists merely of a tall tapering pole attached near the butt end, which is heavily weighted, to a low cross-bar, with a bucket dangling by a long rope from the tip of it. Unseen in the shadow of the bank the Arab hauls upon the rope till the lofty pole is bent low over the river and the bucket is plunged in its current, when, releasing his hold, the point soars up of its own accord, lifting the full bucket to the top of the bank. As the simple mechanism works and the tall points rhythmically prostrate and erect themselves, they emit a thin whining note, the genuine whine of Oriental supplication which runs all through the East; and this bowing and whining are to the traveller on the river a perpetual accompaniment. Long before the last tall point has disappeared in the distance, the next, with its perpetual bowing motion, heaves in sight, and long before the last plaintive cry dies into silence the note is taken up and repeated. And so the sacred chorus and the low salaaming are carried on, while, to that motion and refrain, the precious water is ladled out to the thirsty crops.

But these shaydufs are more than a curious feature of Nile scenery. They may be said to utter, adequately enough, a sentiment in which the whole country is steeped. Their adoring motion is latent in every plant and tree, and, in their song of supplication,

> 'They join their vocal worship to the choir
> Of creatures wanting voice.'

The sentiment thus expressed is the sentiment which a stranger in the country, if he is not always to remain a stranger, has need to understand. It is so easy to call a thing by a name and dismiss it, to state a fact and imagine we have extracted its contents! Egypt, said Herodotus, is 'the gift of the river.' That hits it and that seems sufficient. Certainly the fact is obvious enough. Egyptian geography was made for children. Its distinct arrangement, amid the jumble of the earth's surface, attracts instinctive attention. All are aware of the winding valley, so narrow yet so green and succulent, a mere ribbon of

verdure, with the tall mountain chains flanking it to left and right, and beyond these the endless expanse of yellow desert. All are aware that this strip of fertility is of the Nile's creating, that the great turbid river has brought each ounce of the thirty-foot deep black soil which constitutes Egypt from mountain sides and summits far distant to deposit it here in its place. Every one is aware, too, that the Nile watches solicitously over its offspring and in its annual inundations fertilises and refreshens the land of its creation. What have we to add to such a summary? Is there any mystery to explain, are any of the facts difficult to understand, have we left anything out of account? No, there is no mystery and nothing to add. The Nile is Egypt's sole architect. It was the Nile, unassisted, which laid deep and dark the foundations of the old Egyptian civilisation. The circumstances, indeed, seem all to have been arranged and thought out as if to test the river's capacity. The necessary material was placed at its disposal, the necessary area marked off for its action. All risk of interference was strictly provided against, and rain, snow, frost, thaw, volcanic irruptions, streams and torrents—all the natural agents and elemental powers which spread, distribute, crack up, and intermix the ingredients of continents, were vigorously excluded and fenced off from the narrow domain consecrated to the river's experiment. That the result of such a construction should be of striking, almost ludicrous simplicity, that it can be grasped, as a fact, by any one who gives a moment's attention to the matter, and that it is, as a fact, covered and explained by our old formula, the 'gift of the river' we admit. But there is all the difference in the world between stating the Nile's action as a fact and realising it in its influence and consequences. The most obvious facts are precisely those which in their consequences are most important. It is the subtle and the complex that are rarely exhausted. In the simplicity of the Nile valley lies its claim to our patient attention.

Let us then urge the reader, who, because Egyptian geography is as plain as a pikestaff, would dismiss it from his mind, to dwell on it a moment longer. It is because it is as plain as a pikestaff that it is worth dwelling on, for it is because it is plain that it is powerful. What he sees at a glance others have seen at a glance too. The millions who have lived in this valley, whose civilisation, as we say, was the oldest on the globe, and the vestiges of whose immense architecture still attract our wonder and curiosity, they saw it at a glance. The dominion of the Nile over Egypt was a fact which stared each one of them in the face. Every unit in those teeming millions lived out his whole life under the shadow of that great fact. Not only did he himself

never escape the consciousness of the Nile's supremacy, but he had probably no notion that it ever could by any possibility be escaped. The life of the Nile valley was extraordinarily self-contained. The desert precluded all communication east and west, and though the junction of the river with the sea might hold out an invitation to foreign enterprise, the invitation was neglected. The Egyptians were no mariners. Their attention was concentrated in their valley, and its bounds became the natural confines of their thought. Generation after generation might pass and no whisper from the outer world, no hint that existence was possible save on the bounty of the river, need ever reach the dwellers by the Nile. The reader who considers the obvious and easily discussed fact of the Nile's function in Egypt in this sense, who considers it, that is to say, in its relation to the Egyptian people and to Egyptian history, will see that the more attentively he so considers it the deeper is the significance it acquires. To understand in some slight degree the old race of temple and pyramid builders, to attain to their point of view, and, if it were possible, to see life for a moment as they saw it, must be the wish at times of every traveller in Egypt. May it not be that one way of achieving that end may be to lay aside for a little while the studies and researches of Egyptology and submit ourselves to the conditions and influences which made the Egyptians what they were? After all the Nile is the greatest Egyptologist of all. It alone is master of its subject. Suppose we sit down on its bank by the side of the shaydufs and consider for a moment its methods and ideas.

Just opposite to us, in a bend of the river, showing plainly on the pale pebbly background, are traced a few level streaks of black earth, much like the level dark streaks of one of de Wint's water colours. These were laid down during the last inundation. A hundred yards lower down, where the current is slacker, is another little deposit, more solid, and crops are sprouting already in the dark earth. Such signs as these along the Nile banks are frequent. In some places, where the river, repenting its generosity, threatens to wash away the soil it has deposited, rough stone jetties are thrust out from the bank in the hope of protecting it. Rude as they are, considerable toil must have gone to their construction, nor do they shield more than a few yards of shore, and that precariously. But the prize fought for is indeed of inestimable worth. There is no soil in the world to compare with the black Nile mud. It tends indeed rather to quantity than quality of produce, but how imposing, and in its way grandiose, is the mere affluence and bulk of the three-fold crops with which it is perennially loaded. Whatever one may have

seen in the way of fertility—and to the writer recurs the memory of the vineyards of Algeria, the rice fields of the Ceylon low country, the Constantia fruit gardens under Table Mountain, the rich, small, concentrated Saharan oases—still there must always remain something unique in Egypt's brimming cornucopia-like abundance. Here, where germination and growth are so rapid, and harvests succeed each other so quickly, Nature seems always giving. Not by long processes of reclaiming and improving has she to be wrought up to the pitch of one doubtful harvest in the year. She is in the generous mood. There are no difficulties or delays. The rich, moist mould and the hot sun act like a sort of magic. The husbandman sows his seed and hurries home to whet his scythe. Egypt's lap is always full. Her fat acres are burdened almost uninterruptedly with harvests more succulent and of a freer, larger growth than the harvests of other climates. Does the reader remember the country about Asiut or in the neighbourhood of Luxor ? Does he remember the wheat, how tall and solid it grew, how dark and rich the gold wave of its level surface, how beautifully, by contrast, the little tufted islands of dark green palms stood up in it ? And the tall brakes of sugar-cane where the harvesting was going on, each great stalk, ringed like bamboos, rising nine or ten feet high, making a glowing impenetrable thicket, their long narrow leaves, light green or baked to yellow by the sun, and the lower ones, white and dry and long since dead, hanging about the stems thickening the rich jungle. Men and children, bronzed to copper-colour, worked among the golden canes, and camels squatted on their haunches browsing and waiting for their loads. The power of sun and soil shone in the picture, in the sugar-stored canes, in the tawny, yellow foliage, in the Arabs' smooth limbs and blackened faces. Here was something more than immediate and visible plenty. Here in the glowing light, the rich mould, the ample vegetation, was the habit of ripeness, the signs of nothing hardening and annealing in Nature, but of lavish abundance and almost effortless increase. Such scenes have an influence of their own, and human nature still responds to their appeal. Divorced as it is from religious sanction and disowned by the spiritual faculty we can still perceive what there must have been comforting and sustaining in the old pagan love of Nature and blind, childlike trust in Nature. Not lacking in certain healthy consequences was man's identification of his own instincts with the natural processes around him and the sanction he found in Nature for impulses which since those days have undergone the severest discipline. The very rankness of those early faiths, a rankness as the reader will find who turns over the pages of M. Palanque's

book on Nile work, peculiarly characteristic of Egypt, yet disguises a certain insight to truth. Nature's scheme embraces man. Our tissues share with the tissues of plant and tree. Here in the jungle of rich vegetation, lying on the hot, dark earth, with the sensation of increase and fruition rife in all we see, impregnating the atmosphere, inspiring every branch and leaf and flexible tall stem with an almost conscious vitality, here where Nature is so strong and the call to human flesh of encircling earth so eloquent, it is easy to appreciate the alluring power of the old natural forms of faith. Man has always taken refuge in Nature before he learnt to take refuge in God. But the upward step from Nature to God, does it not imply a certain dissatisfaction with Nature, a realisation of the inadequacy of her philosophy? It must have been difficult for any such dissatisfaction, any such feeling of inadequacy to originate amid these scenes of abundance. It must have been very difficult to escape the embrace of Nature when that embrace was as warm and close and comforting as it is here.

Bearing in mind, then, the capacity and effects of the sediment with which the Nile is freighted, it is small wonder that those who live along its banks should be on the look-out for a share in it, and be quick to grab and guard it as soon as it comes within reach. Nevertheless the thought we had in our mind when we drew the reader's attention to the light streaks of earth along the opposite shore was less of that earth's value and preciousness than of the Nile as a power still in this day active, still carrying on the old work in the old way. This is a point which those who are strangers to the country or who only visit it cursorily are apt to overlook, yet which is bound to influence most strongly those who dwell in the river's presence and profit by its bounty. To the dweller in the Nile Valley the Nile is less the architect of their country than the fertiliser of this year's crops. They do not think of Egypt as the gift of the Nile: they think of these onions or these grapes as the gift of the Nile. They realise the river as a force actively exerting its energy at the present moment. No doubt the annual miracle of the inundation is the event which most vividly illustrates this present energy; indeed, it would be difficult to imagine a phenomenon more striking and extraordinary, whether it be considered in its practical effects or as a kind of spectacular display. Totally at variance with all our notions of floods and their disastrous consequences, the Nile overflows its banks only to bless and fertilise. The river is never quiescent and at rest. It is always either preparing for, or recovering from, its annual miracle. During the later summer months it begins to feel the effects of the spring rains among the

Abyssinian uplands, and its current, swelling by degrees, is charged with dark red sediment. By October it attains its maximum, and rising above its containing banks, which are raised by deposits of the heavier sediment rather above the inland, it inundates the low-lying plains, replenishing the dried canals and leaving behind it on its retirement the precious cargo it was charged with in the shape of a thin coating of glossy mud spread over the surface of the land. Then, its task performed, it gradually recedes, and its current grows slowly clearer and shallower and weaker until the time comes when the old impulse from afar once more admonishes it to another effort.

Thus in year-long respiration the river's body expands and contracts, while up and down the country a busy peasantry utilise and exhaust the last donation and eagerly expect the next. What stranger can sympathise with or fully comprehend so strict a dependence on the river's bounty ? The Nile is the only active and visible factor in Egypt's prosperity, the only factor that seems endowed with intelligence and initiation. The changes of weather vary only from a little hotter to a little less hot. The husbandman can trust securely in the long succession of blue, unclouded days. The conditions of his labour are fixed and steadfast. Only the Nile, in its coming and going, varies sufficiently to concentrate attention and anxiety on its movements. Two or three feet more or less in the normal rise of the river means dams burst and irrigation works destroyed, or great tracts of land left dry and unfertilised. Hence the villagers and peasantry of the valley never pray for a good harvest but for a 'good Nile.' Granted this, the harvest follows with mechanical infallibility There is no anxiety on that score. It is on the operation of the river that all eyes are fixed.

Again, it would be difficult to conceive a sight more suggestive of the river's influence and power over life than the sharp contrast, always in view of the traveller on the Nile, between the luxuriant vegetation of the valley and the hard mineral-white sterility of the limestone ranges which enclose it. The breadth of the fertile tract varies in places considerably. Sometimes the mountains stand well back from the river's course, framing in their tall bare walls, which, with their well-marked tiers of strata, often have the look of amphitheatres of regular masonry, ample plains of verdure and palm groves, and small clustering villages. Sometimes the great bluffs project towards the current as if they would threaten to bar its course, and slanting cataracts of rock and stone shelve down almost to the river's brink. But the aspect of the hills themselves never varies in its dazzling and lifeless brilliance. They have their own beauty. When the

flush of sunrise or sunset resting upon them warms their cold hue to a rosy pink, and in the pure clear air the blue shadows of their defiles are inlaid with the exactitude and precision of fragments of lapis lazuli set in an old ivory carving, or when the icy moonlight, which turns night in Egypt into a colourless day, lends them the wan and spectral aspect peculiar to that hour, they gleam with a weird uncanny loveliness which often rivets the eye on them with a kind of wonder. But still the loveliness is one that seems altogether removed from human life and sympathy, and from the human lot. It is a death-like beauty, significant in a way of the part played by those mountains in Egyptian history. For all through that history the rule that the valley was for the living, the hill for the dead, held good. Here among these white precipices and defiles are the cities and habitations of the dead, which dwell here much as they dwelt in life, in greater or less state; princes in noble halls, all carved and painted with their deeds of prowess, and peasants in mere holes in the sand appropriate to their insignificant lot in the world. Seldom has the writer spent a stranger day than one passed among the mountain cemeteries in the neighbourhood of the ancient Lycopolis. Perhaps a few words copied from a diary kept at the time may help the reader who has not visited the country to realise one of its more curious aspects.

'The western range of hills here, near Asiut, projects in a shoulder or big bluff, which is perforated in all directions with old tombs. The ground surface of loose stone and dust is divided at intervals by cliffs of limestone-rock in which the tombs are bored and tunnelled. Wherever fresh blasting and landslips have laid bare the rock, more borings of the same kind are exposed. The hill is honeycombed with them. Bones, skulls, and ribs litter the ground so thickly that it seems in many places to consist of little else. Shreds and patches of mummy cloth lie about in all directions, sometimes still tightly twined round shrivelled arms and shoulders. It is a Golgotha, where the dead congregate as thickly as the living in the valley. And for their use it is exclusively preserved. No leaf or blade of grass grows here. Nothing living intrudes to question death's absolute supremacy.'

In later centuries, it is true, the living made their abode among these ranges, and the tombs of ancient Egyptians became the tenements of Christian hermits. Yet these later lodgers were scarcely an exception to the old rule, since at the least it was appropriate that those who made it their aim to die to the things of this world should turn to those gaunt hills which from time immemorial had been the abode of death. The journal quoted from goes on to describe the view from that place of

skulls, and how the writer, perched on the white crest of the hill with his feet in bone dust, looked down on a scene of fertility, rich even for Egypt.

'Far to north and south, level as water except where small mud-hut villages in their groves of feather-headed palms are dotted in relief upon its surface, stretches the long band of luscious green through which the Nile rolls and in which seems gathered and compassed all the fertility which should have been scattered over the surrounding hills and desert. The valley for the living, the hill for the dead. The distinction of function was sharp and is as sharply marked in Nature. As far, to a yard, as the Nile reaches in its annual floods, the fertile soil extends. You can stand with one foot in perennial crops and the other in desert sand. There is no gainsaying evidence like this. No peasant who watches the water flow and ebb but knows, beyond the shadow of a doubt, from what beneficent power all that makes life possible proceeds.'

Thus we are brought back to the thought of the Nile as a living, ever-active power, a power unmistakably exerting its influence from day to day and year to year over the life and fortunes of every dweller in the valley. This must always have been, and must always be, the Egyptian point of view. The fact that the river has brought Egypt grain by grain out of the heart of Africa, to lay it down ripe for cultivation in this sequestered corner of the continent, however interesting to a student, is not likely to command the attention of the average populace of the country. These ancient geological events are easily forgotten. We are not concerned about such stale and antique benefits, but about those we receive to-day and expect to-morrow. What seized the attention of the inhabitants of this valley, what profoundly attracted their imagination, and in course of ages came to exert a distinct influence, perhaps, on their character and the developement of their civilisation, was not the thought of what the Nile had done, but what the Nile was doing. It was such everyday and common sights as we have been describing, it was the sight of the new-laid ribs of mould along the river's course, that had to be cherished and preserved, the sight of the contrast ever in their eyes between the death-like sterility of mountain and desert and the luxuriant productiveness of the fertilised valley; it was the realisation of the inexhaustible fecundity of the rich soil brought and given to them by the river; it was sights and thoughts like these which must have been continually impressing and influencing the minds and imaginations of the Egyptians. Above all it must have been the spectacle of the eagerly awaited annual inundation, which must most effectively have driven into

their consciousness the Nile's constant energy and consistent purpose. 'Blessed,' begins the old Nile hymn,

'Blessed be the good God,
The heaven-loving Nile,
The Father of the Gods of the holy Nine
Dwelling on the waters,
The plenty, wealth, and food of Egypt.
He maketh everybody live by himself,
Riches are on his path,
And plenteousness is in his fingers;
The pious are rejoiced at his coming.
Thou art alone and self-created,
One knoweth not whence thou art.
But on the day thou comest forth and openest thyself
Everybody is rejoicing.
Thou art a lord of many fish and gifts,
And thou bestowest plenteousness in Egypt.
The cycle of the holy Nine knoweth not whence thou art,
Thou art their life.
For when thou comest their offerings are redoubled
And their altars filled,
And they are shouting when thou appearest.'

The second stanza of the hymn opens with the lines:

'He giveth light on his coming from darkness;
In the pastures of his cattle
His might produceth all:
What was not his moisture bringeth to light;'

and concludes with the acclamation,

'Shine forth, shine forth, O Nile! shine forth!
Giving life to his oxen by the pastures!
Shine forth in glory, O Nile!'

Such were the thoughts of the Egyptians, such their attitude of mind in presence of the great river, ever-active, ever-creative, in whose hands were food and riches, and at whose coming the pious were rejoiced. A traveller in the country, if he be susceptible at least to natural influences, cannot remain long in the land without in some degree sympathising with those thoughts and feelings. On him, too, as he observes on all sides the evidences of the Nile's creative and renovating influence, is cast, tentatively yet perceptibly, the old Egyptian spell. Conscious of its power it is inevitable that he should look back into Egyptian history for symptoms of its effect. Such an influence, an influence so potent, so clearly defined, so strictly

limited, could not, as he instinctively feels, fail to leave recognisable traces on the race subjected to it. And when with this thought in his mind he dips into history, almost immediately, as the main characteristics of Egyptian life pass in review, there appears something in their aspect—a huge grotesque simplicity, a dreadful yet imposing monotony, as though life were the repetition of an endless formula—which strikes him as somehow a rude reflection of the natural conditions he sees around him. In vain he dismisses the idea as an illusion. The longer he stays in the country, the more his imagination is impressed by the weird regularity of its arrangement, the more, especially, he comes to realise the river's dominion, the dependence of all life upon its rise and fall, and how by that monotonous rise and fall life is held rigorously to the reiteration of precisely the same processes and expedients; and, on the other hand, the more he gives himself to the study of Egyptian civilisation, so strangely distinguished as it is in all departments by its acquiescence in primitive routine, the more impossible he will find it to evade the sense of likeness between the Egypt he sees to Nature's Egypt, and the Egypt he reads of, which, in its various manifestations of art, literature, and science and so on, we think of as man's Egypt. Man's Egypt persists in mimicking Nature's, and in the mechanical routine which controls Egyptian civilisation the effect of surrounding conditions of life seem only too clearly apparent.

And why should this not be so? How often has it been observed that regularity of occupation leaves its traces on character, that, for example, men who are constantly occupied in tending machinery, whose movements are dictated, without need of volition or conscious thought on their side, by the movements of the mechanism—how often has it been observed that such people take on the nature of the mechanism they serve, that they are, as it were, assimilated by it, that they become perfect and dexterous within their own groove, but incapable of breaking away from the groove. As day by day and year by year their attention is governed by the revolution of a cylinder or the rise and fall of a crank, they grow, as we significantly put it, *absorbed* in their occupation, and all capacity for independent thought deserts them. Certainly of all countries in the world Egypt is that in which Nature approaches most nearly to mechanical regularity and mechanical reiteration. The mathematical arrangement of the country, the absence of all cross-purposes and conflicting elements, the clock-like punctuality of the annual floods, are natural facts and conditions which not only have always controlled and dominated Egyptian life, but

which, possessing themselves the character of the movements of a huge bit of mechanism, seem to have impressed on life itself their own rule of unprogressive, unvarying repetition.

To several writers this idea of Egypt's mechanical influence and of the natural effects of such an influence seems to have occurred. Life on the banks of the Nile, as Professor Sayce tells us, is a life of steady but curiously regular toil. The peasant is timed by the river. What he does must fit in with what the river does. The consequence is his work is 'monotonously 'regular' to a degree very difficult for us to realise. 'There 'are no unexpected breaks in it; no moments when a sudden 'demand is made for exceptional labour. The farmer's year 'is all mapped out for him beforehand: what his forefathers 'have done for unnumbered centuries before him, he too has 'to do almost to a day.' To such causes may have been due, perhaps, Professor Sayce thinks, that 'incapacity for abstract 'thought' which he distinguishes as characteristic of the Egyptian civilisation. We wonder Professor Sayce did not develope the idea. He throws it out as a hint in the early pages of his book, but does not recur to it. Yet, evidently, if there is anything in it, it is of vital consequence. We find, again, in Mr. Hogarth's thoughtful and learned work on the Nearer East, a passage of much the same purport: 'Life is full of labour where 'is no sky-sent rain, but only irrigation from a river which will 'not do its part unless canals and drains be cleared annually 'with infinite toil of man and beast, and water be raised by 'hand through a twelve-hours' day.' But this labour is all pre-arranged and unvarying.

'The Nile, crawling year by year over the flats, now a little higher, now a little lower, giving all the possibility of existence that there is, and admitting of no variety in the annual work of preparation for its coming, or of utilising what it leaves on going, makes life monotonous to a degree hard to realise in a zone of quick-changing skies.'

And what was the result? Mr. Hogarth's conclusion is that of Professor Sayce. Such a life was bound to affect mental and spiritual developement, and did affect it.

'Despite all his physical energy, the Nilot is bound not only to lack enterprise, but to direct all his spiritual, as his physical vision, to earth. He takes no thought of the sky, nor of any God therein. The cult of the Sun in old Egypt was an exotic above the Delta; nor anywhere does it seem to have had the usual characteristics, imagery, or consequences of a sky-worship. The real gods were on the earth or under it, clothed with bestial or human forms,

worshipped with myriad superstitious observances, but without reference to religious or social ideals.' *

From such passages as these the reader will understand our desire to link what was said in the last EDINBURGH article, to which we have referred, concerning the correspondence between Egyptian art and life and the low state of intellectual developement which that art reveals—to link this with our recollections of the country itself, and the curious conditions of life which have always prevailed in it. Through life and art we traced the same unvarying round, the same mechanical repetition of the archaic and the childish, deducing from it the people's lack of intellectual initiative and spiritual enlightenment. Here, in Nature and the physical arrangement of the country, we are struck by the same order of phenomena, the same iteration of circumstances, making of life itself a lesson learnt by rote; and now we have Professor Sayce and Mr. Hogarth inferring from these outward circumstances just what we inferred from Egyptian art—namely, the limitation of an Egyptian's 'spiritual, as his physical vision, to earth,' his inveterate 'incapacity for abstract thought.' The two are counterparts. The narrow valley with its fixed boundaries, secluded and cut off from the world; the Nile, regular as a chronometer, controlling the life of the valley with punctual ebb and flow; that life itself lived to order and strictly under its great taskmaster's eye, reiterating monotonously the same round of simple tasks—what are these but a set of circumstances in themselves archaic? Think of such a life in terms of form, and you evolve the stereotyped yet childish conventions of an Egyptian bas-relief. The grasp in which Egyptian art and life are lived, is it not, after all, the grasp of the Nile?

We cannot help turning aside here for a moment to remind the reader of another instance of river influence corresponding in many ways to that which we have been speaking of. The twin civilisation to the Egyptian was the Assyrian, and in several striking particulars the resemblance between the two is obvious. The influence of the same kind of routine as that which dominated Egyptian life is unmistakably present in the Euphrates valley. All that we know of the life of that valley points to the existence of the same conditions, the same inexhaustible fertility of soil, and the same unvarying monotony of daily work which characterised the life of Egypt. In religion and art, those two most eloquent witnesses to all that in a

* 'The Nearer East,' by D. G. Hogarth, pp. 272–3.

race is fundamental, the primitive influence in Assyria survives. Whoever is familiar with the obstinate survival of beast-worship on the Nile, typified by the jackal and vulture-headed gods of the Egyptian pantheon, will be struck, though in lesser degree, by the same survival on the Euphrates.

'In many cases the original forms of the Babylonian divinities survived only in the animals upon whose backs they were depicted as standing, or with whom the gem-cutter associated them on seals. Now and again an attempt was made to combine them with the human figure. Thus Ea is at times represented as clothed in the skin of a fish, a fitting symbol of the relation between the newer and older religions of Babylonia and the antagonistic views of the godhead entertained by the races that dwelt there. At other times the animal form is relegated to that great company of demons and inferior spirits amongst whom room was found for the multitudinous ghosts of Sumerian belief.'

Again:

'Behind the human figures of the Semitic gods the primitively pictorial character of the cuneiform signs enables us to discern the lineaments of figures that belong to a wholly different sphere of religious thought. They are the figures not of men, but of brute beasts. The name of En-lil was denoted by a composite sign which represented the word *elim*, "a ram"; that of Ea by the ideograph which stood for *dara*, "the antelope." En-lil, accordingly, was once a ram; Ea, an antelope.'

It is true the idea of beast-worship was relegated in Babylonia to the secondary order of divinities, but it remained the conception of the mass of the people. 'Whereas in Egypt it was 'the gods themselves who joined the head of the beast to the 'body of the man, in Babylonia it was only the semi-divine 'spirits and monsters of the *popular creed* who were there partly 'bestial and partly human.' We italicise the two words 'popular 'creed,' for the point we wish to emphasise is that in the Euphrates valley, as in the Nile valley, though to a less extent, the archaic conception of religion retained its hold upon the life of the nation. This view Professor Sayce expressly endorses.

'The Semite, though he moulded the later religion of Babylonia, could not transform it altogether. The Sumerian element in the population was never extirpated, and it is probable that if we knew more of the religion of the people as opposed to the official theology, we should find that it remained comparatively little affected by Semitic influence.' *

* Sayce, 'Religions of Ancient Egypt and Assyria,' p. 359.

An obstinate survival of the archaic, that is the striking feature in the religion of the Euphrates. And the same is true of its art. That art, represented by the palaces and sculptures of Assyria, itself an offshoot of the older Babylonian empire and soaked with the Babylonian influence, is indeed quite different in form and type from Egyptian; but in idea and limitations it is strikingly similar. In architecture structural forms are evolved without regard to the function they fulfil; in sculpture the human figure is represented with a cast-iron convention which argues a monotonous repetition wholly oblivious of any notion of progress or developement. The visitor to the British Museum will be struck by the identity in these respects between the art of the Euphrates and the Nile. The figures of Assyrian sculpture, the huge man-headed, winged bulls, for example, so characteristic of that art, remain always in idea and conception obstinately archaic. They are entirely lacking in naturalness, flexibility, variety, life. The body, limbs, and head are not so united or conceived in such relation to each other as to form a real figure. Intellectually the work is of the childish or primitive epoch. Yet, like the Egyptian, it is work not of a childish epoch through which the nation was passing, but of a childish epoch in which the nation was permanently abiding. Mark the strong, firm, precise handling of those impossible legs and feet and arms, the trenchant exactitude of the outlines; the tight curls of hair and beard, each curl a little formula endlessly repeated, primitive yet invariable; the eye and eyelid, the curl of the nostril, the formal articulation of sinew and muscle—these are all indeed archaic in conception, but they are not archaic in execution. They are carved with that strength, assurance, and absolute uniformity which only centuries of constant repetition can engender. As in Egyptian art, so here, there is something strange and at variance with usual experience in this weird conjunction of firm and perfect handling with immature, stunted thought. There is, quite obviously, no hope of developement in an art of this nature. It will multiply replicas of itself without end. It has worn a groove in which it will revolve for ever.

The persistence of the primitive, the childish, the archaic, that is the main characteristic of the religion and art of the Euphrates as it is of the religion and art of the Nile. Such resemblances—resemblances so striking and fundamental—prepare us for, and lead us to expect, a corresponding resemblance in the life-conditions of the two countries; and this further resemblance is, of course, forthcoming. Both these ancient, immovable civilisations were the gift of rivers. The waters of

the Tigris and the Euphrates were distributed over the Mesopotamian valley by a system of irrigation the most complete and grandiose in scale ever perhaps attempted. Travellers to this day describe the remains of the long regular canals built at intervals across the plain which carried the main supplies of water and which were tapped by the lesser conduits which nourished each farm and garden. With the decline of a central governing power capable of working and maintaining these great engineering works the whole system has fallen to ruin. Dams, sluices, embankments, locks have crumbled and decayed; canals have dried up or burst their banks, and for many centuries agriculture has declined until the whole country has been overlaid with desert sand interspersed with a few stagnant marshes. Cities, the richest of the ancient world, have become so totally obliterated that their very sites are unknown or are marked only by shapeless mounds. Yet vestiges and historical records in sufficient quantity remain to prove the almost unexampled agricultural wealth of a region identified with the fabled Garden of Eden, and the possible revival of that ancient fertility remains one of the most alluring problems presented to modern enterprise and science.*

Here, then, in the Tigris-Euphrates valley, we have another ancient civilisation presented to our notice comparable in all its main aspects to the civilisation of the Nile; comparable to it in the immovable and fixedly archaic character of its religion and its art, and comparable to it, too, in the conditions of life out of which the religion and the art grew. In both cases these conditions of life were based upon an unwonted and perennial fertility of soil, which fertility again was not only due to but was constantly regulated and maintained by the overflow of the great rivers which ran through the land. Thus in both countries the note of unvarying routine which distinguished their civilisation is struck originally in this physical formation and in the mode of life dictated by it. The Tigris and Euphrates had the same hold on life in Mesopotamia as the Nile had on life in Egypt.

We must confess that we offer these considerations to the reader with a certain diffidence. We are aware that the theory of the 'influence of environment,' as it has been called, is somewhat out of fashion. Time was when it was supposed to explain everything. Now, as a consequence of those exaggerated pretensions,

* The problem of the Mesopotamian revival is dealt with at some length in an article entitled 'The Baghdad Railway' in the *Edinburgh Review* for October 1907.

it is permitted to explain nothing. Such is our method of reasoning. We take up a theory—evolution, environment, or what not—and fall in love with it; we cast on it the onus of 'explaining' the universe; by-and-by we discover its inadequacy for such a task, and forthwith we discard it altogether and take up with a new solution. Were we to admit the idea of many contributory causes, of many influences, sometimes blending and sometimes conflicting, yet all more or less operative, our advance in knowledge would possibly be smoother and more consistent. It is easy to overdo the environment theory, to make it explain too much and too exactly; on the other hand, it is absurd to ignore it altogether. Who can associate for a day with a desert-bred Bedouin; who, for the matter of that, can reflect for a moment on the characters of sailors or Scotch Highlanders, or on the difference between town and country-bred people, and not perceive that this influence is indeed a very powerful formative cause? Naturally, where the physical conditions are most simple, strongly marked, and continuous, there their effects on character will be most apparent. They may not originate racial characteristics, but they may in such cases control their developement or dictate their limitations. Granting them a certain influence, it seems inevitable that conditions which call for varied efforts, constant adaptability, and an intelligent appreciation of all kinds of natural influences, will be the conditions which, as they exercise the faculties most variously, will most favour mental developement. If this is so, it would be difficult to imagine any life less favourable to intellectual advance than the life of passive routine of the Nile valley—a life self-centred, shut off from the world, intensely monotonous, and from year to year and generation to generation entirely dominated and controlled by the river's automatic action. Without wishing to press the point unduly, we cannot but feel that to realise intimately, by an effort of the imagination based on knowledge of the country, the conditions of life under which the Egyptians lived, is to recognise, between those conditions and the art, religion, literature, and science which ensued, points of resemblance which it is impossible to ignore or explain away.

Along the banks of the Nile stand at intervals, like confessionals, the great temples in which Egypt has embodied its most secret thoughts and aspirations. Let us enter one for a last moment. The influence of the river pervades the building. Throngs of ponderous columns bulge upward out of lotus calyxes to terminate in the heavy buds and blossoms of the same sacred river flowers. Again and again the same buds or open flowers appear. They are held in the hands of sculptured figures and

nod over the foreheads of gods and goddesses. Friezes are formed of their stalks and heads, and bands of ornament composed of lotuses enrich the walls. But most of all it is the groves of huge shafts, distended, ill-proportioned, outraging every rational law of the evolution of structural form—most of all it is these imposing representations of the Nile's emblem which are responsible for the character of the whole interior. These huge obese features may be offensive to all our notions of structural propriety, but they were never invented to express a structural purpose. They were invented to express the ruling sentiment of Egypt—adoration of the Nile. It is difficult to convey to one who has not felt their presence the influence of the river which exudes from these dense-growing groves of bulbs—for they are more bulbs than shafts. All the feeling we associate with swamps and marshes, with sleepy, lapping water, with the succulent, rank growth of reeds and sedges, inhabits these dim interiors. The influence which dominates Egypt is, in the Egyptian temple, focussed and concentrated. All other considerations, all the ideals pertaining to a structural art, are discarded that the presence and power of the river may receive complete embodiment. We may not approve the motive, but we cannot deny the force of its representation. The Greeks, in their architecture, eliminated all local influences for the sake of purely artistic considerations. With equal disinterestedness the Egyptians eliminated all artistic considerations in order that a local influence might exercise over their art the dominion it already exercised over their lives.

What might be the limits upon life of such an influence? We Europeans, who boast an intellectual independence, if we lived on the bounty of a river in a river-created country, knowing of no resources but what the river brought, our hopes and fears centred upon it, the habits of our daily life regulated by it, our traditions and literature and religion saturated by the slow infiltration of ages with the river's influence—should we have fared as the Egyptians fared? Should we have accepted our river's beneficent tyranny, and would that tyranny have extended its sway from our outward lives to our inward habits of thought? Would the power to express rational purposes in artistic forms have been denied us, and for five thousand years should we have been content to build our temple columns in the likeness of river bulbs? To feel that it might have been so, and under what compulsion it would have become so, is to get in touch, perhaps, with the life of ancient Egypt.

So strong is the influence of Nile architecture that sometimes it has seemed to the present writer as if, during the many hours

spent in the dim colonnades of the old temples, he had unconsciously imbibed some of the nature and ideas of the ancient worshippers in these places. It seemed that their life had become his life and their thoughts his thoughts ; that the ebb and flow of the river rocked his existence as it had rocked theirs, and that the rows of white dead hills bounded the universe for him as for them. Nothing, it seemed, could ever intrude here to break the reigning routine or disturb the unvarying iteration of the months.

> ' To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
> Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
> To the last syllable of recorded time.'

Hard by the Nile itself rolls its majestic flood, surveying its crops and lands and people with a great landlord's benignant pride. ' I made this Egypt,' it seems to murmur to itself, ' and I made the Egyptians. It was I also who built those ' temples, and by-and-by, when my people live once more un- ' disturbed under my rule, I shall, perhaps, build others like ' them. What does it matter if there is a break in the series ; ' after all, has not that often happened before ? '

Art. VIII.—GOVERNOR PITT.

1. *Madras in the Olden Time.* By J. Talboys Wheeler. 3 vols. 1861–2. Madras : Higginbotham.
2. *The Diary of William Hedges.* By Col. Henry Yule, R.E., C.B., LL.D. 3 vols. London : Hakluyt Society. 1887–9.
3. *The Early Annals of the English in Bengal.* By C. R. Wilson, M.A. 2 vols. London and Calcutta : Thacker. 1895–1900.
4. *Hist. MSS. Commission, 13th Report, App.* Part III. (The Dropmore Papers) Vol. I., H.M. Stationery Office. 1892.

While William Pitt, afterwards Earl of Chatham, was still a boy at Eton, it is recorded that his grandfather Thomas, the great Governor of Madras, used not infrequently to fetch him over to his house at Swallowfield, and that he took favourable notice of the boy's capacity. In those days the old man was a gnarled and embittered person, soured by the troubles and contentions of his family and the manifold worries of his widely scattered properties, and wearied by a long life of toil. His portrait, which still hangs at Chevening, shows him as a short, thick-set, determined man, with the famous diamond, no doubt to his mind his greatest acquisition, shining gloriously in the hat by his side, and his left foot with the thick heel, in which tradition says he carried over the diamond to France, thrust prominently in the foreground. Always a mighty imperious man, and unsparingly laborious in the pursuit of his aims, he must have recognised and encouraged the kindred strain in his grandson, all the more welcome that he had sought it in vain in his own children. And, no doubt, warmed by this sympathy of spirit, he would growl out to the boy stories of his own hard fights in youth, and of the stern task accomplished during his anxious years as Governor at Madras. It needs no unwarranted stretch of imagination to believe that William learned some of that furious energy of his, and that wonderful power of realising conditions in countries he had never seen, from these talks with the old grandfather, who had much of his own stern directness of vision and intense love of England. From his father he would certainly not have gained these lessons.

Anything which can throw light on the persons who influenced Chatham's early surroundings and upbringing is worth fastening upon in the lamentable scarcity of information about his youthful days. For himself also Governor Pitt deserves commemoration. All that is commonly known of him is that

he discovered the Pitt diamond, which afterwards glittered in the sword of his great-grandson's mighty foe. But he was noteworthy in English history for much more than this. He himself broke the ground for the achievements of his great descendants, and formed a link in their direct succession from the Raleighs and Drakes of Elizabeth's reign. With these sailors' audacious disregard for imposing appearances he attacked authority unable to make its pretensions to monopoly effective, and by buccaneering exploits helped to open a new way for the vigorous current of free British commerce and energy to distant parts of the world; like Chatham and Pitt, he showed that the British adventurers who had insolently ravished an empire were also able to rule it and maintain it.

Thomas Pitt came of a Dorsetshire stock long established in the neighbourhood of Blandford, whence it had thrown out a vigorous offshoot to Hampshire. The Dorsetshire Pitts were of no special eminence in the county, but, to judge from indications to be found in their wills and rent-rolls and in local records, for more than a century before Thomas's birth had been quietly taking their part as country gentlemen, mayors, parsons, doctors, and even Government officials with success to themselves and profit to their fellow-citizens. Their industry, helped by some judicious marriages, gradually added to their acres, and strong family feeling kept them well knit together. The first member of the family of whom we find notice is Nicholas, of Blandford and Wimborne, who lived in the reign of Henry VIII. One of his grandsons migrated to Bristol, where he became a person of importance on the Corporation, and another, John, was a clerk of Queen Elizabeth's Exchequer. John died late in 1601, and appears to have been a man of substance, for he left legacies in money amounting to 250*l.*, a considerable sum in those days, besides lands and houses at Blandford, Poole, Charleton, Preston, and Redcliff, and also the Priory of Wareham. John's eldest son, William, who inherited most of the property, like his father sought his fortune at Court, and rose to be Comptroller of James I.'s household, and principal officer of his Exchequer. He was knighted at Newmarket in 1618, and represented Wareham in several Parliaments; but his chief interest in the records of the Pitt family is that he bought Strathfieldsaye, in Hampshire, and settled the eldest and richest branch there. This branch, however, still retained much property in Dorsetshire, and never lost sight of their poorer cousins. George, Sir William's great-grandson, was looked up to as the head of the family by his contemporary, the Governor, for whom he acted as trustee and guardian of his children; and George's

second son, John, of Encombe, was a good friend of William Pitt the elder. But though this branch added still further to their wealth by marriage, and in the eighteenth century gained the peerage of Rivers, it seems to have bred no men of marked ability after Sir William. Even financial success deserted them finally, for in Chatham's time they were compelled to sell most of their Dorsetshire property.

Sir William's second brother, Thomas, founded the branch with which English history is most concerned. He was left comfortably off by his father, the Clerk of the Exchequer, with the property at Charleton, a house and 'shoppes' at Blandford, and 50*l*. He confined his ambition to municipal politics. In James I.'s Charter of Incorporation to Blandford, dated 1606, he appears with his brother John as one of the seven 'capital 'burgesses,' and acted on several occasions as one of its bailiffs. His eldest son, William, went off to Dorchester, and became mayor of that town, but left no offspring; John, the second son, father of the Governor, took orders, became Rector of Blandford St. Mary's, of which he inherited the advowson from his father, and drew from that source 100*l*. a year. He died in 1672, aged sixty-two, after a useful life passed, according to the testimony of his monument set up many years afterwards by the Governor, as 'a faithful shepherd of his flock, 'and a man worthy of respect for his integrity, his probity, and 'his simple faith.' A third son, Robert, lived at Blandford, and had two sons of some little importance in the closing years of the seventeenth century. One of them, another Thomas, was a Master in Chancery from 1694 to 1712, and was often consulted on business matters by the Governor; the other, Robert, attained eminence as a physician and a Fellow of the Royal Society, wrote some sensible tracts against quack medicines, and attracted Anthony Wood's favourable notice by a learned treatise on the weight of the land tortoise during and after hibernation.

Good, sturdy citizens these early Pitts appear to have been during the century or more in which they were silently building up the fortunes and the character of the family, and winning the respect of their native townsmen, and sometimes even of the wider world of London. Characteristically English are their devotion to public affairs suited to their station and their solemn tenacity of family ties. English, too, the constant care shown by successive generations for parochial charities. Funds for a free school at Wareham were left by one Pitt, the almshouses were rebuilt by another; two of the family left 500*l*. each for charities at Blandford, and other two smaller legacies.

During the years in which these Dorsetshire men had been gradually establishing a family tradition of public spirit and energy in local matters, and sharpening by constant practice their inborn practical temperament, they may well have been also silently gathering strength for the great task of producing men of the same strain indeed as themselves, but with the added touch of genius needful to extend their sound principles of public life to the whole English commonwealth. For the more we study history, the more we realise that genius is not a mere *lusus naturæ*, but must spring from a land well tilled and cared for in previous generations. And unless the land is exceptionally rich and prolific, the production of one genius seems to exhaust it. It is rare indeed to find three great men of one stock succeeding one another so closely as Governor Pitt, Lord Chatham, and his son. In Governor Pitt we seem to see the first riotous exuberance of a healthy but untutored growth, in Lord Chatham the glorious and ungrudging plenty of the fullest crop, and in his son still the same fruitful return, but without that bounteous richness of savour that marks in men's memories the noblest years of the land's prosperity.

Thomas Pitt, son of the aforesaid Rector of Blandford, and of his wife Sara, daughter of John Jay, was third of a family of nine sons and daughters. He was born at Blandford in 1653, the year when Cromwell's right to rule this land was acknowledged by the Instrument of Government constituting him Lord Protector. Of Thomas's early days little is known save that he went to school, probably in his native town, with his first cousin, Thomas, afterwards the Master in Chancery, and another cousin, Edward Ettrick, whose family was settled at Holt, near Wimborne. The Rector died when Thomas was only nineteen, leaving his property in trust to his brothers William, the Mayor of Dorchester, and Robert, of Blandford, to be divided as they should determine among his children. Thomas's share could not have been large, and he appears at an early age to have determined on a life of adventure as a means of gaining a fortune. He himself, when Governor of Madras, relates an instance of his precocious skill in money-making in a letter to his cousin, Ned Ettrick, whom he reproaches for his diffidence in asking a favour, reminding him that he was 'an old schoolfellow, and 'one, too, y^{t} I beat at banka Voletta at Totteridge, and won 'all his money.' However, he did not waste much time in pursuing such small game.

In the days of Charles II. the East Indian trade offered one of the best openings for adventure and fortune-hunting. During

the Commonwealth the monopoly of the East India Company, granted by charters of Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I., but unsanctioned by Parliament, had been questioned by the trading community who were excluded from its benefits. The Company itself, the victim of exactions from the King as well as the Republicans, had been reduced to so low an ebb financially, that it had thoughts of abandoning its business, and leaving the Indian trade to private adventurers; indeed, for some years after the King's execution it made hardly any effort to interfere with the growing freedom of trade to India. This freedom is evident from the famous case of Skinner *v.* The East India Company, which is principally remembered for the serious dispute it gave rise to between the Lords and Commons in Charles II.'s reign. Skinner was a merchant who went on a private trading venture to India in 1657, and brought an action against the Company for damages caused by their agents in the East in confiscating his ship and merchandise. In their plea the Company objected to the amount of damages claimed, but in no way traversed his statement of fact that 'in the year '1657 was a general liberty of trade to the East Indies.' However, it became evident to Cromwell that some regulation of the Indian trade was necessary. Private traders would be quite unable to deal separately with the powerful Mogul Emperors and their deputies, without whose sanction trade was out of the question, or to cope with the Dutch and Portuguese, always on the alert to hamper the English settlements in India. The Company had not only sunk much capital in the East, but were alone strong enough to offer security that the English name would be respected there. Accordingly, in 1658, he gave the Company a fresh charter, enlarging their basis but confirming their monopoly.

In Charles II.'s reign this charter was naturally not paraded, especially since the King always favoured the Company in return for valuable consideration received, and renewed to them all the privileges which Cromwell had granted. But the taste of liberty enjoyed during the Commonwealth had whetted the private traders' appetite for a share in the rich Indian market, and not less so when the swollen dividends of Leadenhall Street made it evident that the ruin brought on hundreds of merchants by the plague and fire of 1665–6 had left the Company unscathed. Moreover, in spite of the reactionary fervour of loyalty during most of Charles II.'s reign, there was a growing disposition among commercial and other middle-class folk to question the King's right to grant exclusive trading privileges without the sanction of Parliament. For

these reasons it became a growing practice for private adventurers to charter ships and engage in the Indian trade, in spite of protests or even more drastic methods adopted by the Company, whose history during the reigns of the last two Stuarts is chiefly a record of their quarrels with these so-called interlopers.

In the fight between privilege and freedom of trade the odds were not so entirely on the side of the Company as may appear at first sight. They had, it is true, the advantages of an established position, of ships, factories, and an organised staff of experienced agents in the East; of the King's favour, and of charters extending back for three-quarters of a century, which, though subject to some question, had never been declared illegal by any constituted authority. They also had the very powerful support of the Privy Council and of the King's judges, which enabled them to gain some notable victories. For instance, in 1683 they obtained an order for the arrest in the Thames of a ship belonging to Sandys, a notorious interloper, on suspicion of the owner's intention to trade in India. Sandys brought an action against the Company for illegal detention, but after a hearing extending over three years he obtained little satisfaction. Jeffreys, the presiding judge, took a high tone in his elaborate judgement about the King's prerogative, drawing a characteristic deduction from his observation that 'the interlopers against the King's prerogative in this par-'ticular, and the horrid conspirators against the King's life 'in their last hellish conspiracy, first appeared in Westminster 'Hall about the same time.' Interlopers were even pursued into foreign ports in the Company's interests. In 1683 the Court of Admiralty ordered the arrest at Dover of the 'Richard 'and John,' 'intending or supposed to intend to be an inter-'loper within the limits of the Company's charter.' The master, Richard Sherwood, getting wind of this order, took his ship over to Antwerp, where he changed her name to 'Speedwell,' and his own to Wood. Even in this foreign port he was followed by an Admiralty officer, whom Sherwood seized and confined on board; whereupon Bulstrode, the British envoy, was instructed to obtain the arrest of the ship from the Spanish Government, or security that she would not 'trade with the 'infidels.'

But these impressive legal and administrative victories had little material effect on those not directly involved. The interlopers had the great advantage which free-lances always enjoy over more unwieldy bodies. They were difficult to reach, and had the sympathy of many Bristol and London mer-

chants, besides that of a section in Parliament. Some of the East India shareholders themselves were inclined to allow greater liberty to private trade. And the Company had many local difficulties which favoured the interlopers' proceedings. The isolated positions of their Indian factories and their dependence on the goodwill of native princes were a considerable source of weakness. Surat and Bombay on the Malabar coast, Fort St. George, Masulipatam, and Vizagapatam on the Coromandel coast, Balasore and Hugli, Kasimbazar and Patna in Bengal, and the factories at Bencoolen in Sumatra and Gombroon in the Persian Gulf, were so far apart and so much at the mercy of all the native Nabobs on their borders, and in some cases of the Great Mogul as well, that in moments of sudden danger they could not render one another much assistance; while the separate tributes required for their trading privileges necessitated a large expense and frequent difficulties with the natives. Moreover, under these conditions the agents, factors, and clerks of the Company were not very amenable to control from London, and their fidelity to the Company's interests depended almost entirely on their own good feeling. Their scale of salaries was certainly not calculated to ensure whole-hearted devotion. A writer began at 10*l.* or even 5*l.* a year, a factor earned 40*l.*, and an agent or president of one of the chief factories received no more than 200*l.*, with an allowance of 100*l.* a year. The Company could hardly expect its servants to content themselves with such pittances and abstain from trade on their own account; and, though the directors at first attempted to prevent it, they were soon forced to submit to the inevitable, and allow them to trade within certain limits. In India, at any rate, an official who had not amassed a fortune was looked down upon by his colleagues. Elihu Yale, a president of Fort St. George, stung by the insinuation of his unruly council that 'it is possible his mighty condition will be found 'too mean to compensate' for his delinquencies, retorted: 'I 'think you are a little unreasonable; that my twenty years' 'diligent service in India and trading, above five hundred 'thousand pagodas [175,000*l.*], should be too poor a crop for 'you is hard; but I cannot help it, having used all honest 'endeavours to do better, so pray be contented.'

But trading on their own account was a small matter compared to the active encouragement some of the Company's servants gave to the interlopers' trade, by taking a share in their ventures, and helping them to overcome the scruples of native princes who had granted exclusive privileges to the Company. This practice was not confined to junior officials;

even agents and chiefs of factories assisted the interlopers. Sometimes dissatisfied servants of the Company left their employment and started interloping on their own account, such as the East India captain who, according to Hedges, threatened that if he did not like the Company's employment on his present voyage, he would turn interloper the next. Even actual mutiny was not unknown. Against this the power of the directors was so slight that they were only too thankful to have it quietly suppressed without troubling unduly about the punishment of the mutineers. In the early part of Charles II.'s reign Sir George Winter, a dismissed president of Fort St. George, refused to acknowledge the official sent to supersede him; on the contrary, he clapped him in prison, and continued to carry on the government successfully for three years. All orders from the Company he treated as forgeries, and only submitted finally to two ships flying the King's flag on a guarantee of security for his person and property. Near the end of the same reign Captain Keigwin made a similar *coup d'état* at Bombay, ruled there for a year, and drew up a regular treaty with Sir Thomas Grantham, who arrived on board a man-of-war, before delivering up his authority. In this case the proceedings terminated amicably with a public dinner, at which salvoes were fired in honour of the King, Queen and royal family, and the Company.

All these disadvantages might soon have proved fatal to the Company had they not possessed as chief guide in their councils one of the strongest and ablest commercial men in England at the time, who was gifted, moreover, with the insight of a statesman. Sir Josiah Child, a victualler to the Navy under the Commonwealth, first became a director, or committee, to use the contemporary expression, of the East India Company in 1674, and thereafter with one exception was annually re-elected until his death in 1699. He was thrice Governor and twice Deputy-Governor, and became the autocrat of the Company. By his influence at Court, once jeopardised in 1676 but recovered by a timely submission, his business capacity and his credit in the City, and his controversial vigour, he overbore most men's opposition. He early recognised that merely defensive measures were unsuited to the Company's needs, and excused his aggressive policy by the observation that 'no great good was ever 'attained in this world without throes and convulsions.' Originally in favour of private trading, he soon became an extreme upholder of the Company's monopoly, and succeeded for many years in defeating all organised attempts by rival companies of merchants to obtain commercial privileges. And his vision extended beyond the commercial dissensions, which loomed so

large in Leadenhall Street, to the time when the British Government of India would be still more important than its trade. Under his inspiration the directors wrote to the Council of Madras in 1687, requiring them to

> ' establish such a Politie of civill and military power, and create and secure such a large Revenue as may bee the foundation of a large, well-grounded sure English Dominion in India for all time to come ' ; nevertheless ' we would have you do no wrong or violence to any in amity with us. We would not wrong a worm. *Just and Stout* is the motto we hope to deserve and wear.'

Under his rule a municipality was established in Madras, and a municipal rate levied for purposes of defence, since the natives ' do live easier under our government than under any govern- ' ment in Asia.' At the same time he was the interlopers' most implacable antagonist, finding a ready seconder in his brother, Sir John, the President of Surat, who showed them no mercy, and marched several of them through the streets of his presidency with irons round their necks. Sir Josiah was not so fortunate in his other agents in India, but he restrained many interlopers from ever leaving England, forty-eight it is said in one year alone, by means of Privy Council orders and prosecutions before Jeffreys and other amenable judges.

No man proved a more determined and successful opponent of Child's policy of preserving the monopoly of Indian trade for the Company than Thomas Pitt, son of the quiet country rector of Blandford St. Mary's. At what age he first took to a life of adventure is not known, but most probably he went to sea before he had left his teens, for he is called captain at the age of twenty-six, as if he were then qualified to be master of a ship, and before that appears as a man of some means. A passage from the already-quoted letter written in 1702 to Ned Ettrick, ' you must forget old stories and think of the old Proverb, a ' rugged Colt makes a good horse or else w^{t}. had been become of ' you and I and George White,' suggests that these three may have been associated in some madcap adventures of Pitt's early years, he probably supplying the energy and initiative and the other two, who afterwards appear as respectable London merchants, the funds. At any rate, his first recorded voyage to India was in 1674, two years after his father's death, when he was only twenty-one. He sailed either as a passenger or as a member of the crew in the ' Lancaster,' one of the Company's ships. He must have started with some trading capital, for in the following year he was already established in trade at Balasore, and had become so notorious an interloper that orders came

from Leadenhall Street for him to be confined and sent home by the next year's shipping. But young Tom Pitt had already made powerful friends in India, among others Edwards, the chief of the Balasore factory, who entertained him in his house; and, although he appeared before the Madras Council and promised to return home no active steps were taken to ensure his obedience. Nor did he then return; on the contrary, for the next few years he carried on a lucrative business in alliance with several of the Company's servants, principally Matthias Vincent, the chief in Bengal, Edmund Bugden of the Hugli Council, and Edwards of Balasore. He was even promised employment under the Company, and though disappointed in obtaining a regular post, appears in 1678 to have acted as Edwards's deputy at Kasimbazar. This alliance with the two powerful servants of the Company, Vincent and Edwards, was further cemented about this time by his marriage with their niece Jane Innes, who belonged to an old Scottish family of that ilk, descended on the spindle side from a natural son of James V.

Pitt was not slow in turning to account the advantages which his influential friends and connexions gave him. 'ʼTis here as 'in all parts of the world y^t^ money begets money,' was a favourite expression of his in after-life, when he was in a position to give advice to his old companions and their sons; and during his first seven years in the East, from 1674 to 1681 he fully justified his right to emphasise this maxim. Starting at twenty-one on what must have been a slender capital, he had not been in India four years before he was engaged in trading concerns of some magnitude. He made several voyages to Persia, whence he brought cargoes of horses, for which there seems to have been a ready market in India, undertook commissions for his various associates, and took some share in voyages to Achin and the Malay Archipelago. Partly on his own account, partly in association with others, he acquired an interest in several ships, among which the 'Recovery,' 'Speedwell,' and 'Bengal Mer-'chant' are specially named. In his business dealings he already showed signs of the arbitrary temper which characterized him as Governor of Madras and in his paternal relations. His success was therefore certainly not due to a cringing spirit; in fact, unless he had made himself indispensable by his capacity, some of his correspondents could hardly have supported the breezy outbursts of ill-humour and reproach which occur in his early letters. To Mr. Bugden he reports 'the generall complaint 'against you for being soe slack with your pen,' and tells him to give 'my love to my horses'; while even to the 'Worshipfull

'Matthias Vincent' he excuses his free language about mutual friends who had been maligning him in this cavalier fashion :

'Sr. I humbly beg your pardon for the freedom I take herein, which I thought better soe then doe as some endeavour to, hang men behind theire backs, butt speake faire to their faces, which are like Wolves in Sheepes Cloathing, whose ends I hope will bee irrecoverable miserable. I doubt not but in time you will finde them out. Heartily wishing you may . . .'

Pitt returned to England in the 'William and John' in 1681, at the very moment when specially determined efforts were being made to deprive the Company of its monopoly. Papillon, once Child's patron, was leading the party among the shareholders anxious to widen the Company's trading basis ; but their efforts were frustrated by Child, and they themselves driven out of the Company. The Levant Company was trying to secure a charter which would have admitted them to the Persian Gulf trade. They failed likewise. But the general result of these attempts was to stimulate the new spirit of opposition in the trading community ; and the contest between the Company and the interlopers waxed fiercer than ever during the last years of Charles II.'s reign. To this period belongs the failure of Sandys and Sherwood to elude the vigilance of the King's officers and Child's successful prosecutions of many adventurers. But others had better fortune. Among these was Pitt himself. He never showed fear in the course of his life, and was just the man to enter upon an enterprise which promised annoyance to those with whom he disagreed, even if it involved danger to himself, especially if that enterprise was likely to prove lucrative. Moreover, he was a sturdy Whig, as he amply proved later by his enthusiasm for William III. and the Hanoverian succession ; no doubt, therefore, it added a zest to his project of forming a small company to carry on another interloping expedition that its execution would enable him to have his fling at privileges unsanctioned by Parliament and defended by questionable acts of prerogative. Materially he was well equipped for the adventure. The capital acquired by his seven years' trading in India must have been considerable, for even a hundred years later, when the opportunities were much less, the grandfather of Thackeray, a man without a quarter of Pitt's commercial genius, was able to retire from India at twenty-six with a competence for himself and his family during the rest of his long life, gained entirely by private trade. All that was to be known about the Indian trade was by this time familiar to Pitt, who also had an unrivalled acquaintance with other interlopers and

was on friendly relations with most of the Company's principal servants. Finally, he had friends in the City, such as the Ettricks, George White, and the Gregorys, who took a large share in his present venture.

By the beginning of 1682, less than a year after his return to England, Pitt had formed his small trading association and had collected a little fleet in the Thames. The Company, discovering its destination, succeeded in arresting some of the ships before they could cast off, and obtained a judgment against Pitt and another owner at the suit of the Attorney-General. But Pitt himself, in spite of the issue of a writ *ne exeat regno*, escaped on February 20 on board the 'Crown,' Captain Dorrell; while six other interloping ships, two at least of which belonged to his association, started about the same time. The Court of Directors took all possible measures to forestall him. They wrote to their factories in Bengal ordering his arrest, and 'when 'you have got him into your custody be sure to secure him, he 'being a desperate fellow and one that we fear will not stick at 'doing any mischief that lies in his power.' Fort St. George was required to send military assistance against this 'fellow of 'a haughty, huffying, daring temper.' Instructions were also sent to their own fleet to make all haste away and arrive in the Bay of Bengal before him. But Pitt's ship was well chosen for speed, and not only outstripped the East India fleet, but also the 'Defence,' with William Hedges, the new agent for Bengal, on board, though she had left the Downs a month before him. The 'Crown' actually sighted the 'Defence,' about three months out, but soon showed her a clean pair of heels, and dropped anchor at Balasore on July 6, 1682, just eleven days before her. Pitt did not waste those eleven days. He landed in state with guards and trumpets, and gave out that the old Company was in a very low condition, adding that he had come as the agent of a new company. He hired a great house, brought several chests of treasure ashore, and at once began trading with the local merchants. He also raised an armed body of Portuguese and half-castes so formidable of aspect that when the luckless Hedges finally arrived he found it necessary for the Company to pay customs on goods landed in their own factory. At Hugli it was just the same. Pitt's uncle Vincent, who had already been dismissed the service and had taken a share in his nephew's venture, met Hedges with a party of soldiers, and, though he entertained him ceremoniously in the Dutch garden, soon showed that he had no friendly intentions to his old masters. Shortly afterwards the terrible Pitt arrived with three ships, 'lands in great state, with 4 or 5 files of soldiers in red coats,

'well armed, and great attendance of Native Soldiers, with 'Trumpeters, and takes up his quarters with the Dutch, by 'the name of the New Company's Agent, bespattering the old 'Company.' Here also Pitt established a factory, and, after obtaining the necessary permit from the local Nabob, carried on a thriving trade with the natives. Interlopers such as he had a great advantage over the Company in being willing to pay ready money for their goods, and, unhampered by scruples about creating precedents, they were lavish in their bribes to the Indian governors and officials. Nor was he the only interloper who used similar methods with success. A certain Captain Alley was even more impudent in flouting the authority of the much-harassed Hedges. When Alley visited the native governor of Hugli he

'went in a splendid Equipage, habitted in Scarlet richly laced. Ten Englishmen in Blew Capps and Coats edged with Red, all armed with Blunderbusses, went before his pallankeen, 80 Peons before them, and 4 Musicians playing on the Weights, with 2 Flaggs before him, like an Agent. A gawdy shew and great noise adds much to a Public Person's credit in this country.'

Alley was on the best of terms with the native rulers and had most of the Company's servants, save Hedges, in his pocket. On one occasion he publicly dined on board a Company's ship with several of their officials, 'making great mirth and jollity by 'firing guns all the afternoon.' After reading Hedges's timorous complaints of his own impotence and of his subordinates' corruption, it is easy to realise that jovial adventurers like Alley and Pitt had little difficulty in carrying all before them.

In one instance Hedges had a momentary advantage over Pitt. In October 1682 he travelled up the Ganges by boat to visit the Nabob of Dacca, and obtained an order for the arrest of Pitt and Dorrell. After the usual Oriental delays, the order was duly sealed in the following January and despatched to Bulchund, the native governor of Hugli. Unfortunately, the order proved valueless, for Pitt and Dorrell 'compounded with 'Bulchund for a good sum of money and 5 per cent. paid by 'them for all their goods; with other great presents; though 'these men are so shameless as to deny it.' Pitt had now almost completed his business, and early in February, seven months after landing at Balasore, he touched there again on his way home, defiant as ever. Hedges notes that he was at dinner when Pitt and Dorrell passed by in their sloop, armed with four guns and manned by thirty seamen, on their way to the 'Crown,' which left the roadstead with two other interlopers

on the following day, February 5. The 'Crown,' after another fast passage, arrived in England in June 1683.

Up to the last the East India Company had hoped that Pitt and his associates would be arrested and have their goods confiscated in India, where more summary methods were possible than at home. However, they acquiesced in the reasons alleged by their servants for not executing their orders, and retrieved their failure as far as they could in July 1683 by instituting an action for damages in Chancery. Pitt's wealth at this time may be inferred from his ability to give 40,000*l.* security for his appearance in answer to the claim. The suit dragged on for three years, and resulted in a fine of 1000*l.* on Pitt 'for interloping 'within the limits of the Company's Charter and other great 'misdemeanours committed in the East Indies, whereof he was 'convicted.' But in 1687 he found means of persuading the Company to rest content with a payment of 400*l.* This appears a cheap price for the seven months' trading, since the Company complained to their agents that such interlopers as he 'come to 'the Bay but for a short time and as it were by stealth, and 'yet they bring home more in proportion of those new desireable 'goods by far then our ships.' Nor was his profit limited to his share in the cargo of the 'Crown' and the other ships. A year after his return a cousin, John Pitt, whom he had assisted in an expedition to India, writes to Thomas with particulars about the house he still owned there and various business transactions still depending in his own or his partners' names.

During the remaining years of the Stuarts Thomas apparently remained in England, not, we may be sure, allowing his capital to remain idle or run to waste. His connexion with the Indian trade remained unbroken, as appears from customs records in the Treasury and East India Company's books. He lived as befitted his station in a house rented at 120*l.*, where he kept open table for his friends and relations and for his growing family of children. He also had his coach and horses and a due number of servants. But he was guilty of no extravagance, and kept his expenditure within 1000*l.* a year. His wealth and energy gave him consideration in political circles. Though his Whig leanings were not to his advantage during James II.'s reign, they made him a person of some consequence at the sudden Revolution of 1688. The East India Company under Child's influence had so completely identified themselves with James II., who was a shareholder, that his abdication threatened to leave it defenceless. But Child's sole interest in politics was with a view to his Company's interests, and he took early steps to make himself friends at the new Court. It can hardly be mere coincidence

that on November 23, 1688, less than a month after William's landing at Torbay, Thomas Pitt, the Whig and interloper, 'was 'admitted into the freedom of this Company gratis.' The reduction of his fine in the previous year indicated that some approaches had already been made to him by the Company, but it is unlikely that the reconciliation would have been so complete unless they had been anxious to secure for their interest such an influential and experienced member of the ruling party. Pitt was elected a member of the Convention Parliament for Old Sarum, but being unseated on petition, came in for Salisbury at a bye-election in May 1689, and was re-elected there for William and Mary's first Parliament. He had no doubt already acquired some property near Salisbury, and in 1690 he secured the right of nominating the members for Old Sarum by purchasing for 1500*l.* from James Earl of Salisbury the manor of Stratford-under-the-Castle with the house of Mawarden Court.

In the House of Commons he acted on a committee to consider the numerous cases of complaint against the East India Company, but otherwise made no figure there, owing possibly to his commercial preoccupations at this time. One scheme in which he was interested was to render the Avon navigable from Christchurch to Salisbury, no doubt with a view to securing a convenient wharf almost at his own front door for loading ships engaged in one of his ventures. The sum of 3500*l.* was spent on the work, which comprised a pier out to sea at Christchurch, probably of some use to privateers engaged in the French war. He himself, in partnership with eight other London merchants, fitted out the 'Arcana' galley for this purpose in 1691, spending 8000*l.* on her and manning her with a crew of 160. She was so much larger than most privateers that a doubt arose whether discipline could be maintained on board without the King's commission. The Admiralty accordingly agreed, instead of issuing letters of marque, to hire her outright, and at the same time allowed the claims of Pitt and his friends to all the prizes she might capture. But his most interesting undertaking was the formation of a Company of Merchant Adventurers trading to the north-west part of America, of which he was one of the founders in 1691. Hitherto the Hudson's Bay Company had enjoyed the monopoly of the fur and fish trade in Northern Canada under Charles II.'s charter of 1670. It is characteristic of the interloper Pitt to have assisted in a project for trenching upon their privileged preserves. His company was granted the sole right of trading, fishing, and mining over Labrador, Davis and Frobisher Straits, and Baffin's Bay, with permission to catch whale and sturgeon and fit out men-of-war,

also to buy land and raise joint stock in consideration of occasional payments to the Manor of East Greenwich of three elks and three black beavers. This North-West Company, as it was called, gave considerable trouble to the Hudson's Bay Company and was in rivalry with it until 1820, when the two became united.

Elk-hunting and fishing for sturgeon in the snow-bound lands of North America offered little attraction to Pitt personally, whereas the East with its promise of easily acquired wealth still called to him. He resolved, therefore, in spite of his respectable position at home, to venture on one more interloping expedition. The Revolution had not been so unfavourable as had been expected to the interests of Leadenhall Street. It is true that a rival Dowgate Association had been formed, and that during the debates of 1691–2 the feeling of Parliament was evidently against the old Company; but William himself was too preoccupied with the Continental war to raise such a domestic storm as its dissolution would have caused, and finally granted it a new charter in the autumn of 1693. Still, its monopoly was highly unpopular, and when it attempted to continue its arbitrary policy of the Stuart days by arresting a suspected interloper in the Thames the storm was raised, and the House of Commons resolved in January 1694 'that all the subjects of England have equal right 'to trade to the East Indies, unless prohibited by Act of Parlia-'ment.' Before this Pitt was already in India on his last interloping venture. He started in March 1693 with two ships, the 'Edward,' armed with forty-four guns and commanded by Captain Gifford, and the 'Seymore,' and carried 60,000*l.* in silver for purposes of trade. The Company had failed to get an order in Council to stop him, even though they offered with unwonted moderation to take over one of his ships at their own charge; but they wrote to their Bengal factory and repeated their warning of eleven years earlier against Pitt's 'great huffing and swaggering.' Sir John Goldsborough, their commissary general at this date, had more energy and authority than poor Hedges. In the interval between Pitt's arrival at Balasore on October 1 and his own death in November 1693 he inspired some vigour in his subordinates' efforts to checkmate Tom Pitt and his mate, Allen Catchpole, 'who huff and bounce and give out Mountaines on 'their one side.' Afterwards Pitt had all his old success, gaining over native rulers and former friends in the service, notably the trading chaplain Evans, who afterwards became Bishop of Bangor, and firing at a party of soldiers sent up to arrest an accomplice. At last the directors, moved partly by the outcry raised at their detention of the 'Redbridge,' belonging to Sir Gilbert Heathcote, and the impending resolution of the

House of Commons, announced early in January that they had come to terms with Pitt's partners at home, and directed that his stock was to be treated as their own, 'and that we hope is 'the end of all our long quarrels and contentions.' And so it proved. The Company's agents undertook to recover his debts and to watch over his concerns on his departure, although they allowed themselves this parting shot: 'Capt. Pitts to the last 'made a great bouncing and have carried himself very haughtily 'ever since his arrivall in these parts and has not scrupled to 'speak very Disrespectfully and uncivilly of your Honours.' Pitt sailed home in January 1695. It was of a piece with his luck that the Company had become concerned in his last venture, for one of his ships, the 'Seymore,' was captured by French privateers with the rest of the East India fleet and carried into Brest, where Pitt was commissioned to repurchase the cargoes on behalf of the Company.

On his return to England he found that the Parliament of 1690 had been dissolved, and in the new House of Commons, which was much more Whig in colour than its predecessor, he appeared as member for his own borough of Old Sarum. His old adversaries of Leadenhall Street were now in great straits, with enemies gathering upon them from all sides, and above all with Montague, First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, against them. The question was no longer one of stopping interlopers, but of maintaining their own existence. Concessions at home they felt to be indispensable, but they also had the wisdom to see that all was not lost if they could maintain and strengthen their position in India. To ensure this they would have to pitch upon a representative at once above the temptation of truckling to their rivals for a share in the profits and masterful enough to inspire respect and exact obedience from subordinates—in a word, as unlike as possible to the Vincents and Hedges of the past. Pitt fulfilled all these requirements. That he had been an interloper and knew all the secrets of the trade, and that he was a Whig member of Parliament who might do them considerable damage in the forthcoming struggle, were but additional reasons in favour of his appointment. Accordingly, on November 24, 1697, he was chosen President of the Company's settlements on the Coromandel coast, in Orissa, Gingee, and the Mahratta countries, and on the coast of Sumatra, and Commander-in-Chief of Fort St. George and Fort St. David. Extraordinary powers of discipline over his own Council and the other servants of the Company were granted to him. 'For the defeating of inter-'lopers,' the Court observes with some humour to their repre-

sentative in Bengal, 'we think our President's advice may be 'helpfull to you, he having engaged to Us to signalize himself 'therein.' That there was considerable opposition to his appointment is hardly surprising. The shareholders turned out eighteen of the directors responsible for it, and old Sir Josiah Child deplored from his retirement at Wanstead 'the sending of that 'roughling, immoral man . . . which everybody knows I was 'always against.' It is not, however, surprising that Pitt himself should have been willing to go. He was only forty years old, still in the prime of life, energy, and high spirits. He had many interests in India, which the Court could hardly expect him to neglect, since they offered him a salary of only 300*l.* a year, and specially sanctioned his eldest son Robert accompanying him as a free merchant. Moreover, his acceptance implied no desertion of Whig principles or of the care for the interlopers; that had already been won by the Resolution of January 1694. On the other hand, the impending conflict between the old Company and the new, in which each would have to prove its capacity to hold the privileges entrusted to it, was one most likely to appeal to his quarrelsome and dictatorial nature.

Madras, where Pitt landed as President, or Governor, on July 7, 1698, was not the Madras of to-day. Fort St. George, where the Europeans lived, was an oblong of 400 yards by 100, containing only twelve streets and alleys and 129 dwelling-houses, bringing in a total yearly rental of under 60*l.* In the three chief settlements on the Coromandel coast, Madras, Fort St. David's and Vizagapatam, there were only 119 Englishmen and fifty English women all told. The natives and half-castes were more numerous, but did not exceed 300,000 in the whole Presideney. The Black Town at Madras had hardly any fortifications, and one of Pitt's first measures was to remedy this defect. Life at the fort was patriarchal. The President and all the Company's servants dined together at a common mess—off a service of silver plate we learn incidentally from the statement that Pitt sold the Company his own for that purpose at the price of 765*l.* On Sunday mornings the Council would meet and accompany their chief to church. The President exercised a stern discipline over the morals and manners of his subordinates, but had cause to complain to the directors that 'here is an Imbibed 'Notion in some who ought to know better, that noe Servant 'of yours Ought to have Corporall punishment, which has been 'the Ruine of many a Youth in this place.'

During his eleven years of office Pitt was called upon to meet attacks from English and native adversaries, which called forth

all his vigour. Shortly after his arrival, William III., empowered by an Act of 1698, gave a charter to the new 'English 'Company trading to the East Indies,' authorizing them to establish their business in India and terminating the old Company's powers in 1701. The new Company forthwith sent out an ambassador accredited to the Great Mogul, and three Presidents armed with consular authority to Hugli, Surat and Masulipatam. The three Presidents were all former servants of the old Company, two of them, Sir Edward Littleton and John Pitt, having once been in association with Governor Pitt. John, the cousin once befriended by Thomas, was destined for Masulipatam, and became his chief adversary in the fight between the two Companies. John took up a false position at the outset, refusing to salute the Union Jack when he touched at Madras and following this up by insolence to the Governor. Thomas paid him back with interest in his own coin, and put him in his place by retorts, of which this is a comparatively mild example :

'The fable of the froggs Suits your present temper, and the Morall and reflexion I hope will make much impression on you soe as to prevent your having the fate of the froggs. I recommend to you allsoe the reading and practising the fables of the Lion and the Mouse, and the Wolf and the Stork. . . . If you passe by here you must behave your selfe very Civilly, noe Drums, fflags nor trumpets within our bounds, for here shall be but one Governour whilst I am here' ;

and after a good deal more advice of this nature he breaks off saying 'I think I have now answer'd all your riff raff Stuff, 'which I hope will be as tiresome to you to read as 'tis to me to 'write.'

In the end John contented himself with strong language. Not so Thomas. He forbade his subordinates to recognize or have any dealings with the new Company's officials ; and when he inadvertently sold a couple of his own horses to a secret agent of John's, he reflected with some satisfaction that he had obtained double their value, 'both being old and founder'd.' He hindered the new Company's trade, but, when Sir Nicholas Waite, their President at Surat, began to interfere with the old Company's ships, threatened that 'if he touches a ship belonging to this 'Presidency we will certainly fit out a briske privateer to make 'reprizall' ; and he would doubtless have proved as good as his word. In Surat, where the old Company were badly served, things went ill with them ; but within the orbit of the Governor's influence the new Company was reduced to impotence. John

quarrelled not only with the old officials but also with the new Company's Ambassador, and was reproached by his own directors for his failures and his want of tact. He died in 1704, and was contemptuously dismissed by Thomas, whose ferocious hatreds were not even allayed by death, with the words: 'I think him the ungratefullest wretch that ever was 'borne. He is dead and there's an end.' In Bengal Sir Edward Littleton found his match in the local servants of the old Company, but not before Pitt, in the course of a characteristic little skirmish, had told him that 'those whose ffronts are cased with Corinthian brass will stick at nothing.'

Before John Pitt's death the victory had been won. In April 1702 the new Company agreed to union on terms favourable to the old Company. The defeat of the younger association's project of entirely superseding their rivals was undoubtedly a benefit to the English in India, for their own inexperience and their agents' folly were hampering trade and setting the natives against the English nation at a moment when the outbreak of war with France and Spain made it peculiarly necessary for all Anglo-Indians to show a united front under a strong government. The satisfactory union was largely the result of Thomas Pitt's vigorous defence of his masters' interests; and they had the grace to recognize this with unusual warmth. Not only the old Court, so a friend writes to him, 'were very hearty to your interest,' but 'most of the new spoke with great respect of you, soe by 'this I see you are safe with both sides.' His appointment was confirmed by the joint Board, and Pitt thanks the new Company's directors in these dignified terms:

'Whereas my gratitude as an Englishman obliges me to pay all Defference to the Blessed Memory of King William, So allso on this occasion I can't butt remember that great Saying of his to the French King's Plenipotentiarys att Ryswick upon concluding the Peace, which furnishes mee with apt words for this address to You. '"'Twas my Fate and nott my choice that made mee Your Enemy," and since You and my Masters are united, Itt shall bee my utmost Endeavours to purchase Your Good Opinion and deserve your Friendship.'

Quite as serious as the quarrels with the new Company's agents were the native troubles during Pitt's governorship. Under Aurungzebe's long reign from 1657 to 1707, the Mogul Empire developed many signs of weakness. The Mahrattas of Central India rose under Sivaji, and, though temporarily subdued, were a constant source of danger. In the outlying provinces of the Empire the nabobs showed little respect for

the central authority, and were almost independent. But the English factories had proved quite unable to profit by this weakness. Aurungzebe himself had attacked several of them, and imposed ignominious terms of peace on the Company in 1690, and in times of tranquillity he required large sums for himself and his officials for permission to trade. The provincial nabobs, too, had to be bribed, and after them the local custom house officials and heads of villages as an inducement not to interfere with the transit of goods. Wandering Mahratta raiders also exacted occasional toll. In fact the natives throughout India regarded the Company as a convenient milch-cow. In the words of Pitt's last report to the directors :

'When the Europeans first settled in India they were mightily admired by the natives, believing that they were as innocent as themselves ; but since by their example they are grown crafty and cautious and no people better understand their own interest, so that it was easier to effect in one year which you shan't do now in a century, and the more obliging your management, the more jealous they are of you.'

Pitt, however, adopted a new tone towards the natives. He was the first governor to recognize the need of maintaining European solidarity against them. Thus when the Danish settlement of Tranquebar was attacked by the King of Tanjore, he immediately made common cause with them. Insolent native governors he addressed in terms such as these :

'I received your impertinent and insolent letter. We all know your King to be great, wise and just. . . . but most of his little Governors, amongst whom I reckon you, to be very corrupt and unjust. We would have you to know we are of a nation whose sovereign is great and powerful, able to protect his subjects in their just rights over all the world, and revenge whatever injustices shall be done them, of which there will be speedy instances given. I am not a little surprised at your saucy expressions, as well as actions in imprisoning my inhabitants, when you know that I can fetch you hither and correct you for both. This is an answer to your letter.'

But the success of Pitt's new method with the natives is best shown by his dealings with his neighbour, Dáúd Khan, Nabob of the Carnatic and the Gingee country. On this person's appointment in 1701, Pitt offered him the customary presents, but refused to increase them, as weaker governors had done, when the Nabob indicated his dissatisfaction with their value. On the contrary, when Dáúd Khan began to plunder the neighbouring villages, he landed marines from the ships in harbour, called

out the trained bands, armed native scouts and a Portuguese company, and put the walls of Madras in a posture of defence, resolved that if the Nabob would not accept the present first proffered him he should have nothing at all. This show of force induced Dáúd Khan to accept the original present; he also invited himself to dinner at the fort, where he was entertained with '600 dishes great and small' and received several cases of cordial waters from the Governor.

But Dáúd Khan was only waiting for a better opportunity, which occurred in January 1702. He then plundered the countryside, cut off provisions from the fort, stopped its trade, and besieged it. Nevertheless Pitt was deaf to his broad hints for further presents, and answered him firmly, 'We can put no other construction on this than declaring a war with all European nations, and accordingly we shall act.' The outlying factories of Fort St. David's, Vizagapatam and Masulipatam were warned of the danger and their inhabitants ordered, if necessary, to retire on Madras. The neighbouring Danish, French, and Dutch factories were invited to send assistance, an invitation to which only the Danes responded. The Fort St. George officials were encouraged to raise a troop of horse by allowances for horse-keep. Vigorous sorties were made to protect the Company's cloth-workers and convoys. The siege lasted four months; the last two, however, were chiefly taken up in haggling over the terms of Dáúd Khan's withdrawal. Finally Pitt beat him down to 20,000 rupees, a sum, as he shrewdly observes, 'which, considering the very long time they have been here, will be no inducement for him to come again, or any of his successors hereafter.' Five thousand rupees were added for his chief minister, but nothing at all was to be paid until damages to friendly villages and to the Company's trade had been made good.

The Governor celebrated peace by a feast to all the troops in the fort, but abated none of his precautions. With that practical turn, which appears again in his grandson's arrangements for distant expeditions, he ordered a supply of 300 hogs, ready killed and salted, to be always on hand to prevent the recurrence of a scarcity of food. When war was declared against France and Spain he urged the directors to send him reinforcements, and was fully prepared to give a good account of himself against any hostile fleet. Dáúd Khan reappeared in 1705, but obtained nothing more from Pitt than cases of cordial waters and Pegu oranges, which he returned as only fit for children, and when he came to dine with two hundred instead of the agreed twenty followers, Pitt refused him entrance to the fort, and sent him his dinner in the garden outside the walls. After that Dáúd

Khan gave no more trouble, and, when Aurungzebe died in 1707, Pitt found himself much sought after by the various native claimants to the imperial throne. Either by luck, or more probably owing to his own foresight, Pitt from the outset gave his support to Shah Alam, who killed all his rivals ; whereby and with the aid of some moderate bribes to court officials, he obtained for the Company several desirable villages and valuable trading privileges.

Nor was Pitt merely a fighter. By his economic developement of the Company's resources he also showed himself a great administrator. He encouraged the settlement of native painters and clothworkers, he increased the revenue of the town and farmed the taxes on betel-nuts, arrack and tobacco on advantageous terms. He even tried to raise silkworms, but the heat of Madras killed his mulberry trees. Like his grandson, he was a great gardener.

' My leisure time,' he writes in 1703, ' I generally spend in gardening and planting and making such improvements which I hope will tend to the Company's advantage and the good of the whole place for that in a little time I hope the place will be able to subsist of itself without much dependence from the country for that in the late long siege we were not a little pinched for provisions.'

He asks the ' top gardener ' in Bengal for seeds of ' pease, ' beans, turnips, carrets, cabages, water melons, etc,' and writes to his steward at Salisbury for ' firr tree seeds.' He wound up the affairs of the new Company, left in great confusion by John Pitt, and helped the Bencoolen factory out of difficulties of their own making. He promoted an Anglican mission for half-castes and natives, but when the Roman Catholic bishop and his priests attempted to set up their authority against his, he took ' occasion to make those Churchmen know that they are under ' an English Government.' The native tax-collectors all over the country he found very insolent, ' only those within our reach ' I keep in pretty good order, by now and then giving 'em a ' pretty good banging,' and it is duly recorded in the consultation book that the Governor himself ' twice or thrice thrashed ' some native harbour official for neglecting his work.

Pitt's habit of ' banging ' people unfortunately grew with age, and was the result of irritability hardly surprising in a man who had been working so long and at such high pressure in the Indian climate. Even his manifold activities for the Company's interest did not absorb all his energy. He carried on a vast private trade of his own, which forms the subject of much of his correspondence. His eldest son, Robert, on the Governor's

principle that 'a man's youth is the only time to drudge in 'busyness,' was sent for a trading expedition of more than two years to China, no doubt chiefly on his father's capital. Latterly, however, he confined his attention principally to diamonds, the most portable and convenient form of merchandize. In the course of this business he came into possession of the famous Pitt diamond, which gave him trouble and annoyance for fifteen years. After three months haggling with the merchant who brought it from Golconda he finally obtained it in March 1702 for 25,000*l.*, a quarter of the sum originally asked. It weighed 410 carats in the rough and 135 when cut as a brilliant. The malevolent rumours in India and England * as to his method of obtaining it were effectually disposed of in the accurate account he wrote his son from Bergen in 1709. In addition to his own affairs he took endless trouble for his friends. He collected the debts of his predecessors, Sir Elihu Yale and Sir Streynsham Master, and in his zeal for their interest pursued a fraudulent debtor almost to his deathbed in order to extract from him a will in their favour. Numberless letters are concerned with good advice to the parents and guardians of young men sent out to India to be under his protection; for an old friend never asked him in vain for this service. When the sons did well, he gladdened the fathers' hearts by warm commendation. Even when one young man marries, a grievous crime in his eyes, he relents enough to tell the father that the wife 'is a vertuous, modest, 'good humour'd, comely young woman, and I don't doubt but 'will make him a good Wife, since he was resolv'd to marry in 'these parts; for she justly deserves the Character I give her.' He also had his own estates at home and his family to think of. His wife had been left in charge of the younger children and with some control over the property; but being a bad business woman and foolish in other ways, she gave constant anxiety. Robert was not much better, for on his return to England in 1702 with the great diamond, instead of attending to business, to his father's huge disgust he took a wife. An unusually restrained comment on one of Robert's mistakes in business is, 'I here write you a little but think the more.'

* Pope's lines are well known:

'Asleep and naked as an Indian lay,
An *honest* factor stole a gem away:
He pledged it to the knight; the knight had wit,
So kept the diamond, and the rogue was hit.'

The last line of which originally ran:

'So robbed the robber and was rich as P——.'

To add to his anxieties a succession of troubles with two warring castes at Madras and of quarrels with his council cast a shade over the last year or two of his Presidency. He became more than ever prone to give his opponents 'bangings.' At first he managed the native dispute with tact, but lost his temper as it dragged on, and took a violent part for one side. His quarrels with his subordinates were still more serious. Of one member of council he said, 'profound ignorance and pride are his only qualifications'; the captain of the garrison, always a troublesome fellow, became so abusive of the Governor that he had to be put in irons; the second in council, Fraser, was suspended because Pitt declared that he would no longer sit at the Board with him, while a rumour reached London that he had threatened to whip and hang him. These scandals and Pitt's often expressed wish to return afforded the directors an excuse to supersede him in September 1709 by Gulston Addison, brother of the popular Under Secretary of State; though the real reason is stated to have been the annoyance caused to the Whigs in power by his son Robert's constant support of the Tories. But no disgrace was cast upon him as upon some former governors after their discharge. On the contrary, orders were sent that he should receive the 'Great 'Cabbin' on one of the Company's homeward-bound ships, and be treated with the respect 'suitable to the character you 'have borne in our Service.' The respect of the directors for their old Governor increased with their experience of his successors' feebleness. Less than two years after his return to England two English officers were captured by a local rajah and ransomed at a cost of 200 pagodas: the Court's comment is: 'Had the like case happen'd in the late President's time he 'would have recover'd them both at a tenth part of the Money, 'or rather the Rajah would not have dared to attempt the Sur-'prizing of them,' and later in congratulating the Fort St. George officials on obtaining some concessions they remind them that it is largely the effect of President Pitt's interest with the great men and that success 'is now so much the easier because the path is 'ready trodden.' It was not therefore mere brag when Pitt writes to his son on his way home:

'I delivered it [Madras] up in the most flourishing state that ever any place of the world was in, vastly rich notwithstanding our great losses, and famous throughout all those parts of the world for our honourable and just dealings; free from all manner of tyranny, extortion, oppression or corruption as to mee (I wish I could averr the same of others), which I suppressed as far as it was in my power, and prevented its being very burthensome to the commonalty.

I shall give but few instances here of the flourishing condition of Maderass. In May or June last there was at one time fifty sayle of ships in the roade, besides small craft at least 200; the revenues of last year amounting between 70 and 800,000! pagodas of which above 10,000 arises out of the Mint. The place, when I left it, was not onely admired but in favour of all the kings and princes in those parts; a regular and peaceable government within ourselves and continued friendship of all about us. I brought the trade of the King of Siam to our port . . . and the favours from the present Great Mogull are without a president. . . . And wee of all Europeans, were the only favourites; the Dutch at the same time were put out of Golcunda.'

When Pitt landed in England late in 1710, after more than a year's leisurely travelling by the Cape of Good Hope, and thence by a neutral ship round to the 'melancholy place of Bergen,' he was nearing sixty, and might well have earned a rest. But rest was the last thing he cared for, and he had become too great a personage to escape the attentions of politicians. The world of London was ringing with the achievements of the 'great 'Pits' and with rumours of his 'dyomont . . . as big as a 'great egg.' On his way from Bergen to England he was tracked out at Amsterdam by the banker Drummond, an agent of Harley, who was just forming his Ministry. Drummond reports to Harley: 'I think I have made him yours, and have drunk 'your health heartily with him. He will have a powerful purse 'in England and be a thorn in the side of some great men now at 'the head of the Bank and the India Company if they should 'thwart you,' and advises that he should be brought into the House for Cornwall. However, Pitt preferred the independence of Old Sarum, which he represented in the Parliament opened on November 25, 1710; and, whatever language he may have held under the genial influence of Dutch liquors, he remained firm to his Whig convictions. He was very angry with his son Robert's Toryism. 'It is said,' he complained,

'you are taken up with factious caballs, and are contriving amongst you to put a French kickshaw upon the throne againe, for no true English heart as the present Queen has (and pursues no other interest than that of her own nation) can please your party. If I find or hear of any child of mine that herds with any to oppose her present Majesty's interest, I will renounce him for ever,'

and he warned him against being 'one of those chilldren that are 'awakened with the rattle that is commonly nameing the Church 'of England, for which noe man have a greater veneration than 'myselfe; but I know it is often named within those walls to 'bring over a party'

He himself took no prominent part in debate ; the autocratic methods of India no doubt unfitted him, as they do most men, for the equal clash of intellects in the House of Commons. But on important occasions he stood up for his principles. In 1714, when Bolingbroke had at last succeeded in making the Ministry frankly Tory, he opposed the expulsion of Steele for writing a Whig pamphlet, and spoke several times against the Treaty of Utrecht. In the course of one speech he moved that ' an humble ' Address be presented to her Majesty that her present Ministry ' shou'd be sent to France to be his Ministry for three years,' a form of sarcasm somewhat suggestive of the turn adopted by his grandson in his first speech on the Prince of Wales's marriage. Less than a month after the landing of George I. and the Prince of Wales, Pitt was admitted to a long audience with them, during which he took occasion to show them his great diamond, in the vain hope that they would buy it, and afterwards expressed himself much satisfied with their political views. He secured a clerkship of the Green Cloth to the Prince of Wales for Robert, chiefly with the view of weaning him from his Tory associates and confirming his loyalty. But he was more in his element when real danger threatened from the Pretender's invasion. He offered to appear with any number of horsemen that might be required, and to equip and arm a company of foot at Blandford within ten days, and complained that more was not asked of him. He exults that his second son Thomas is out with his regiment of horse carrying as their motto *Amor regis et patriae tantum valet*, and indulges in characteristically ferocious language about the rebels. But for this energy he had to pay ; a few days later, for the first time probably in his life, he admits that ' desire of ease ' and retirement comes on with age, and it is as much as I can ' compass to write what is necessary for me.'

This, however, was but a passing feeling of lassitude, and in the following year with indomitable spirit he accepted the governorship of Jamaica, a difficult post, as the island had a peculiarly unruly assembly with which several governors had proved unable to cope. Pitt entered upon his task with characteristic energy, and before starting studied the history of the troubles, made several suggestions for dealing with them, and demanded precise directions as to his powers from the Government. But precision was the last thing the Board of Trade desired, possibly because a new Ministry with Addison, who had formerly shown himself unfavourable to Pitt, as Secretary of State, had taken office in 1717. At any rate Pitt never went to Jamaica, and on June 21, 1717, Nicholas Lawes, a planter, was appointed Governor in his stead. Something besides disgust

at the Ministry's indecision may have rendered Pitt willing to throw up the post, for on June 29 the long-drawn negotiations for the sale of his great diamond were at last brought to a conclusion. After it had been proposed for sale to most of the crowned heads of Europe it was finally bought by the Regent of France for 133,000*l.* During the spring Pitt's attention was absorbed in arranging for the sale, and the receipt of the money removed one of his reasons for desiring a Government post. In the previous December he had told Robert that he was starting again on his travels in his sixty-fourth year to retrieve the losses due to his son's wasteful management of the estates and to the sums bestowed on his other children, amounting altogether to 90,000*l.*, while the capital of over 30,000*l.* expended on the purchase and cutting of the diamond had for fifteen years brought him no return.

Pitt had been obliged to resign his seat for Old Sarum on his appointment to Jamaica, but returned to Parliament as soon as his successor had been nominated at a bye-election for Thirsk. He had strongly supported the Septennial Act against the Tories in 1716, a measure rendered necessary by the Pretender's invasion; but when in 1719 his son-in-law, Stanhope, proposed to give relief to the Dissenters by repealing Bolingbroke's Schism Act of 1714, he ranged himself with Walpole and the Tories, then favoured by the Prince of Wales, in opposing the King's Government. But his alliance with Walpole did not last long, for two years later he spoke and voted against his proposals for dealing with the South Sea Company's affairs, chiefly, it appears, on the ground that the delinquents were unduly shielded. He was certainly not the man to approve of the compromising measures adopted by Walpole even in the interest of financial and political appeasement.

He remained in Parliament till the end of his life, after 1722 again as member for Old Sarum, but, so far as the records show, took little further part in the proceedings. Nevertheless Diamond Pitt remained a notable figure in London society owing to his connection with the Stanhopes and the Villiers's, and his own fame as Governor. He never allowed his mind to rust, and even in India had found time to read Clarendon's 'History' and Lord Halifax's 'Miscellanies,' and was quite capable of bandying compliments and chaff at Lord Oxford's table with the terrible Dean of St. Patrick's, who must in many ways have proved a kindred spirit. By this time also he had become a great landed proprietor, and found full scope for his energy in managing his various estates. His ambition many years back had been to acquire 'such a competency . . . soe as that I should have been

'able to establish a family as considerable as any of the name 'except our kinsman, George Pitt of Stratfieldsaye.' In his interloping days he had already acquired the Stratford-under-the-Castle estate, and on his return from India he bought several manors in his native county, including the parish where he was born.

His chief land purchases, however, were made after his sale of the diamond. In 1717 he bought the Mohun estates in Devon and Cornwall for 53,000*l.* from the widow of the Lord Mohun who in 1712 was killed in a duel with the Duke of Hamilton. These included Boconnoc, then the finest house in Cornwall. But his favourite abode for the last seven years of his life was Swallowfield Place, near Reading, bought from the Earl of Clarendon in 1719; in London he rented a house in Pall Mall to which was attached a close or field of forty-five acres. All his property, to which almost up to his death he was constantly adding fields and farms, gave him endless trouble. He had disputes about burgess-rights in his borough; his agents, builders, gardeners, and other workmen he freely accused of robbery and villainy; when the Dean and Chapter of Salisbury claimed as top and lop some trees blown down in the great storm on the night of November 26 to 27, 1703, he grimly commented on the 'fast ordered for that storm'; 'sure those gentlemen that 'design to get by it will make a feast, and be so ungodly as to 'wish for more such. It is therefore my order to withstand 'their injustice, and not to suffer them to meddle with a tree, 'although I spend the value of the estate in defence thereof.' *

He was also much troubled by his own family. His wife, during his last absence in India, had given rise to scandal by her intimacy with some 'scoundrell rascally villain,' and was never forgiven by her husband. He would not live with her after his return, possibly never even saw her again, and he pursued his vindictiveness so far as to stint her allowance and leave her nothing in his will, although she certainly appears to have had enough money of her own to live upon with considerable comfort. His eldest son Robert quarrelled with his mother and sisters while his father was away, and seems to have been a weak, indolent man led astray politically by his 'hellish acquaintance' the Duke of Ormond and other Tories, and careless in business matters. He was jealous of his brothers' influence over his father, and even

* There is another better-known instance of clerical rapacity in connexion with this storm. The heirs of Bishop Kidder, Ken's successor at Bath and Wells, who was lying in bed with his lady, when both were killed by the fall of a chimney stack through the roof, were sued for dilapidations by the next bishop.

resented his own son's acceptance of favours from him. His wife, however, one of the Villiers family, appears from all accounts to have been charming, and though the Governor was at first very savage at his son's early marriage, he was won over by her when he saw her. One son, William, died when Pitt was in India, 'with complaints in his mouth' against Robert; his twin Thomas went into the Army, married the heiress of the Earl of Londonderry, and was himself raised to that title. He appears to have been unsatisfactory, especially in money matters, for he tried to cheat his brother Robert of part of his inheritance, and had some shady dealings over the estate of his orphaned nephew, Lord Stanhope. Of the third son, John, little is known except that he became Governor of the Bermudas and lived till 1754. The daughters both made good marriages—Essex, the elder, with Charles Cholmondeley of Vale Royal, and Lucy, whose gentleness is still a tradition of Chevening, with Earl Stanhope, the soldier and statesman.

Though Thomas Pitt was moody and quarrelsome with his children, and lashed them immoderately with his rough tongue when they displeased him, he was not an ungenerous father. In spite of occasional growls he kept open house for them and their children, though one may suspect that it was not an unmixed joy to live under his tyrannical eye. There was no chance, for example, of 'going to the mascarade . . . without leave,' for 'the keys were . . . carryed to the old gentleman's 'bedside at ten o'clock every night.' He also dealt liberally with them in money matters, and took care that they should be well educated and trained to high ideals of conduct and to serious work in the professions of their choice. To his numerous poor cousins and relations he was a bountiful friend. Frequent evidence of this occurs in his correspondence with Robert, on whom he lays this solemn injunction:

'Remember that wee are not borne only for ourselves, nor has God Almighty bestowed this plentifull fortune on me to give it only amongst my own children, but also necessitous relations and friends which I will not faill to doe for His glory and my own comfort and happiness. . . . If ever you intend to be great, you must be first good, and that will bring with it a lasting greatness, and without it, it will be but a bubble blown away with the least blast.'

Poor old Thomas Pitt, grandsire and great-grandsire of Chatham and of Pitt, is a pathetic figure. Throughout his long life he was a wild man; his hand against every man and every man's hand against him. In his interloping days he was struggling against a powerful Company backed by all the forces

of privilege and vested interest, and it was not for want of will and endeavour on their side that he came out of the struggle unsubdued. As Governor he moiled and toiled for others as well as for himself, and perhaps no man less combative could have won so complete a victory for good government and the establishment of the English position in Madras. At home, when political battles failed him, he was ever ready to fling himself into a fray with suspect subordinates or with unruly members of his jangling family. 'Extraordinary humoursome and testy' he grew, and withal terribly alone, as all tyrants must needs become. The habit of uncontrolled power, fostered in him by his continual and generally victorious fights for wealth and superiority, is an evil pedagogue for character; and Pitt surely suffered and made others to suffer for this cause as few others have. But, pathetic and savage as he was, in his loneliness he accomplished much for his country and his family. Indeed, not the least memorable of the old man's traits was his affection for his grandson William, a lad of eighteen when Thomas died in 1726.

'He is a hopefull lad, and doubt not but he will answer yours 'and all his friends' expectations,' was the expression of his penetrating judgement. From him William may well have learned the high ideals of public and private conduct which Thomas ever held before himself, even when his roughness and impetuous ferocity led him furthest astray from their dictates. From him also William must have inherited that impetuous force of language, that directness of utterance, and that rich abundance in the English tongue, which are always apparent in the grandfather's letters. Chatham's noble indignation at oppression and folly sometimes finds a parallel in the more untutored and ferocious expressions of the Governor's wrath against evil-doers. In the following passage of a letter to Chatham's father there is promise too of the honesty of purpose and the mellow wisdom which controlled the fiery patriotism of our greatest statesman.

'When this reaches you your brothers will be 17 years old. If their genius leads them to be scholars, I would have them sent to Oxford, but placed in two distinct Colleges; and if inclined to study law, you may enter them in the Temple. But if they are inclined to be merchants, let them learn all languages and obtain perfect knowledge of the sciences bearing on trade. I would have them get some insight into military affairs, not knowing what revolutions they may have to see, for I believe that trade will flourish rather than decay. If they go to the University, I am willing to allow them what is necessary, in which I would not have them prodigal or pitiful. If they do not keep good courses, I shall discard them

for ever; and so tell them. Do you also follow the good advice I give you. Give good example to your family by your life and conversation; avoid lending money or being surety for others; be cautious what company you keep, and do not misspend your time. There are some now at the head of the Government who, contrary to their own expectations, have acquired high position by hard study and great diligence in business; and you can only hope to make a figure in the world by using the same means. If you are in Parliament, show yourself on all occasions a good Englishman, and a faithful servant to your country. If you aspire to fame in the House, you must make yourself master of its precedents and orders. Avoid faction, and never enter the House prepossessed; but attend diligently to the debate, and vote according to your conscience and not for any sinister end whatever. I had rather see any child of mine want than have him get his bread by voting in the House of Commons.'

With these words may fitly end the story of Governor Pitt's life.

Art. IX.—EDGAR ALLAN POE.

1. *The Works of Edgar Allan Poe.* Edited by John H. Ingram. Complete Edition. Edinburgh: A. and C. Black. Third edition. 1883.
2. *The Life of Edgar Allan Poe.* By William F. Gill. London: Chatto and Windus. Third edition. 1878.
3. *American Men of Letters. Edgar Allan Poe.* By George E. Woodberry. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company. Second Edition. 1885.
4. *The Works of Edgar Allan Poe,* with an Introduction and Memoir by Richard Henry Stoddard. London: Kegan Paul, Trench and Co. 1884.
5. *The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe.* Edited and Chronologically arranged on the Basis of the Standard Text, with certain Additional Material and with a Critical Introduction by Charles F. Richardson, Professor of English in Dartmouth College. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1902.
6. *Edgar Poe, sa Vie et ses Œuvres,* and *Notes Nouvelles sur Edgar Poe.* By Charles Baudelaire. Paris: Calmann Lévy. 1885 and 1886.
7. *Névrosés.* By Arvè de Barine. Paris: Librairie Hachette. 1898.

A recent American editor of Poe's Works, Professor Richardson of Dartmouth College, has headed his Introductory Essay with the words, 'Edgar Allan Poe, World-Author.' The description seems grandiloquent: we think of Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, as 'world-authors,' and it at once appears that to set the name of Poe beside these names were the mere wantonness of critical aberration. Yet, notwithstanding this, there is a sense in which the term world-author as applied to Poe is defensible. 'Taking five representative libraries of world-'literature,' says the Professor above named, 'in English, German, and Italian, Poe's is the only name appearing in all five.' And again, 'In many a little German, Austrian, or Italian bookshop, 'he stands as the sole representative of the literature of his native 'land.' These facts are, to say the least, remarkable; and to these must be added, not merely that wherever English is read Poe's work is more or less well known, but that, than Poe, no foreign writer has exercised a greater influence over the more recent literature of France. Definitely introduced by the

masterly translation of Charles Baudelaire in 1855, Poe's writings firmly established themselves on Gallic soil, where their effect may be traced, not merely in the poetry of Baudelaire himself and of Verlaine and his followers, but in such collections of stories as the 'Contes Cruels' of Villiers and the 'Morts Bizarres' of Richepin. Next, since in matters literary, not merely the Latin races but Europe generally is apt to look to Paris for guidance, and to follow Parisian initiative, Poe's influence has received through France a further wide extension. Among the distinguished writers of outlying nations, we have heard Almqvist,* the proved genius and suspected criminal, referred to as the 'Swedish Poe,' Poe's Swedish disciple. While, if we now return to native writers, living and recent, do we not find Poe reincarnate in two of the most popular of all: in the creator, that is to say, of Sherlock Holmes, and the author of the 'Strange 'Case of Dr. Jekyll'? It is in the sense, then, not certainly of being one of the world's greatest writers, but of exercising a living and almost universal influence, that Edgar Allan Poe is entitled to be spoken of as a 'world-author.'†

And it is surely a somewhat striking fact that, of authors born in America, Poe is the only one to whom that term can with any propriety be applied. We do not say, of course, that this is as it ought to be; we are content to recognise that so it is. And, in so recognising, we have clearly present to our mind the fact that, in the persons of Longfellow and of Whittier, the United States have produced poets of sweeter temper and kindlier humanity; that, in Nathaniel Hawthorne, they have produced at least one greater literary artist; that Emerson and Lowell, on the one hand, and Whitman and Cooper on the other, are writers of infinitely higher moral tone, and of much more distinctively national and democratic character than Poe. Yet, of all these distinguished men, with the sole possible exception of Cooper while his novelty lasted, there is not one to whom the American term 'world-author' can or could be applied, as we have shown that it may be to Poe.

How, then, comes this about? To what characteristics—since not of greatness, at least of singularity, or fascination, or refinement—may be ascribed that barren pre-eminence which, throughout a life of more than common suffering, stood its owner in so strangely little stead? The question might be answered in a word, by saying that it is indeed to originality, or

* Died in 1866.

† Perhaps the very latest of able aspirants to Poe's mantle is the author of 'John Silence,' Mr. Algernon Blackwood.

to singularity, that Poe owes his position in literature. Amid the greater and the lesser lights, the wandering and the stationary, which thickly stud the shining heaven of song, he stands as a dark star. But this answer, of itself, is not enough to satisfy curiosity. For the attribute of originality, of effective or impressive singularity, must almost of necessity carry with it something of the nobler attribute of greatness. To examine, then, in somewhat greater detail, into the essential character of Poe's talent were perhaps no uninteresting enquiry; nor, though a year has passed since his centenary was celebrated, is it perhaps too late to conduct that enquiry now.

The Poe family was of Irish origin, but the evidence relied on by the biographer to connect it with that of the De la Poers would not satisfy genealogical experts. The poet's grandfather, when first we hear of him, was exercising the trade of a wheelwright, though he afterwards rose to some distinction in the American revolutionary army. The poet's head, judged from his portraits, was of Byronic type; but it lacked the characteristic of race which was so distinctive of Byron. Born at Boston, January 19, 1809, Edgar Poe was the son of an actress and a stage-struck law-student, who for love of her had taken to the boards. And this parentage is significant; for, unless we are mistaken, something of the theatrical, as distinct from the broadly artistic, temper had been transmitted to the boy: an impulse, that is to say, which was something more than the mere impulse to create—a desire to employ artistic creation as a means of playing on the feelings of an audience. Perhaps some slight indication of the respective characters of the parents may be gathered from the recorded fact that Mrs. Poe, *née* Miss Arnold, would appear in the part of Ariel, while her husband, an unsuccessful actor, was fond of disporting himself in that of The Wild Gallant. Left an orphan in infancy, under circumstances calculated to appeal to the benevolent, the boy Edgar was adopted into the family of a wealthy tobacco-merchant—a Mr. Allan, of Scottish extraction, but settled at Richmond, Virginia—whose marriage had proved childless. There he exchanged the shabby make-shifts of the strolling player's life for an existence of luxurious ease; there he made his home for nearly twenty years to come; and there, in the best society afforded by that aristocratic State, he acquired the perfect breeding which, by the testimony of contemporaries, distinguished him through life. He was a singularly bright and handsome boy, and his adoptive parents spoiled him. Well! so long as boyhood lasted, that was doubtless pleasant enough. But, by an irony of human nature, it is generally just those people who

are most ready to spoil a child who are least ready to put up with the results of that spoiling when the child shall be a child no longer. So Poe was fated to discover. Meantime the Allans had brought him with them to England, and placed him at school at Stoke Newington, where he remained for about five years. They then carried him back to Virginia, where in February 1826, after further schooling, he was entered at the local University of Charlottesville.

But by this time the idiosyncrasy of the lad had begun to declare itself. He was found to be 'unlike other people'—an offence, we submit, whose degree of flagrancy must depend on what the 'other people' are. He had become solitary and reserved. That no one really knew him was the unanimous verdict of his class-mates; * and this in spite of the fact that, being distinguished as a versifier and also as a swimmer, he would seem to have been qualified to shine both in study and athletics. By the light of after events it is easy to realise that Poe, as a budding thinker, was experiencing the need to be alone with his nascent thought and inchoate ideal:

> 'For I have revelled, when the sun was bright
> I' the summer sky, in dreams of living light
> And loveliness; have left my very heart
> In climes of mine imagining, apart
> From mine own home, with beings that have been
> Of mine own thought.' †

But though, in writing thus, Poe awakens present-day sympathy, one can scarcely in fairness blame the worthy Allan for failing to enter into his feelings, or for looking askance at his singularity and being disappointed by it. Alas! there was more than mere singularity involved, for young Poe tippled, gambled, and ran into debt. His foster-father therefore removed him from the University, when he had been there less than a year, to place him under his own eye in his own counting-house. From this surveillance Poe eloped, taking his career at eighteen into his own hands.

There is evidence that, at a later date, he was an effective reciter; but he had apparently no fancy for the profession of his parents, against which the Allans may very likely have warned him. He therefore now reverted to an earlier tradition of his family, and sought to follow in the footsteps of his paternal

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* Woodberry, p. 29.

† From 'Dreams,' given by Richardson as one of Poe's early poems. It is not given by Ingram.

grandfather, who, as an ardent revolutionary, had distinguished himself in the War of Independence. Having enlisted in the States Artillery, he served for two years with credit—a fact which would seem to have weighed with Mr. Allan, who, at the end of that period, received him back into favour, and, by way of giving him another chance, procured him a cadet's commission in the Military Academy at West Point. The young scapegrace had shown aptitude for soldiering; in soldiering perhaps lay his salvation—well, then, a soldier let him be! So Allan may have argued. But Poe's dæmon was again too much for him. For Poe was a genius, and genius is proverbially erratic. As a private gunner he had done well; as cadet he proved a mere waster, deliberately contriving to get himself dismissed from the Academy. After this, Allan washed his hands of him, and probably was not sorry to have a good excuse for doing so. For the Allan household had lately seen great changes. Mrs. Allan had died—the childless Mrs. Allan, in whose interest we may assume that Poe had been introduced into the house, and who had probably been his best friend there. And not only this, but Mr. Allan had married again, and now had a child of his own. It is therefore easy to conceive that the adopted son, who had served at first as a plaything and then as a stop-gap, may have come in these altered circumstances to be regarded as an interloper or encumbrance, and an ill-behaved one at that. And that Poe *had* been ill-behaved we must admit. But none the less shrewdly must he have suspected that this was less the cause than the pretext of his dismissal. His pride, which was paramount, would of course keep him silent on this point; but his sense of injustice suffered would not on that account be less. And, with every wish to be fair to Allan, and to appreciate his point of view, it must still be acknowledged that gross injustice had been done. For Poe had been reared in the lap of luxury, to regard himself unconditionally as Allan's heir. He was now turned adrift—for bad behaviour, it is true. Yet was it not a little hard that nothing whatever should be done, or attempted, to ease, or to tide over, the transition? For he was literally cut off with a shilling. From a position of affluence, he passed at a single step to one of penury, which remained his portion for the rest of his life. He was not a Stoic. Far from that, he was ill-regulated, a pleasure-seeker, capricious and self-willed. Can we wonder, then, that when, as a disinherited man, he entered the ranks of the literary profession, it was with much of the gloom and something of the perversity of an Ishmaelite, who feels that all men's hands are against him? It is apparent from Poe's story of 'The Assignation' that the career of Byron had impressed him deeply. Well,

here, upon the threshold of life, he found himself in the approved position of a Byronic character—an outcast having cause of quarrel with mankind. Only that, in Poe's case, this cause of quarrel was of a more rankling, if also of a more material, kind than that of a Harold or a Manfred.

Henceforth, without remission, he led a life which may be compared with that of Grub Street. But the conditions under which Poe won his bread with the pen were yet harder than those of the London of Richard Savage or Oliver Goldsmith; where at least there was always the chance of a rich patron, at worst always the moral support of a great national literary tradition. For, in the America of 1830, literature had as yet scarce begun to be. The golden good sense and commonplace literary ideals of a Benjamin Franklin represented the style of reading most in favour. Periodical literature—to which Poe was to devote himself—was little better than a mere chaos, where, for want of authoritative criticism, there was as yet no preference for good work. And it may here be mentioned that, though Poe's name was not long in becoming known, there was never, so long as he lived, any reasonable demand for his writings; nor did he ever receive for them more than a bare 'living wage.' 'The Raven.' that world-famous poem, brought him in just two pounds of our money.* He was by no means exacting—made but very modest claims; but there was one dream which possessed him through life: to have a magazine of his own. It remained a dream—one which, to the very last, he was still striving to realise. Had he been a mere gifted trifler, he could scarcely have fared worse. But he was far from that, for, besides cherishing a singularly lofty ideal of literary perfection, he was also—allowing for certain admitted lapses—a very industrious workman. Despite the uncertainty of his financial outlook, he was not long in saddling himself with a wife—selecting, with characteristic impulsiveness, a beautiful but consumptive child, a cousin of his own, Virginia Clemm by name.† And, whatever may have been Poe's sorrows, he had at least, until near the end, the great consolation of a home which was as rich in love as it was poor in all besides. Mrs. Clemm, his aunt, who was also his mother-in-law, lived with him and his wife, devoting herself heart and soul to their interests. And, indeed, without her care they would scarcely have kept body and soul together; for she seems to have been, in the popular phrase, by far the best man of the

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* Gill, p. 151.

† Born in August 1822, she married Poe in September 1835. (Woodberry.)

three. To his fellow-creatures other than these two, Poe was indebted perhaps as little as any poet that ever lived.

In the years 1827 and 1829, before his dismissal from West Point, he had already published two slender volumes, bearing, respectively, the titles of 'Tamerlane and other Poems,' and 'Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane and Minor Poems.' The contents, so far, were of the youthful amateur variety. But in 1831—the year, that is, of his rupture with Mr. Allan—he brought out a second edition of his poems, with certain additions, which included the first drafts of some of his most characteristic pieces: namely, 'To Helen,' 'The City in the Sea,' 'The Sleeper,' and 'Israfel'; whence it is to this volume that Mr. Woodberry, the most careful and discriminating of his biographers, assigns the first manifestation of his genius.* We shall deal with his poetry collectively later on in this article. Meantime it may perhaps be necessary to mention that he did not look to verse for his support. If his intellect was at times disordered, it was never so much disordered as that. No; he accommodated himself to circumstances and wrote reviews for the periodicals—reviews, among others, of Dickens's 'Barnaby Rudge,' and of Elizabeth Barrett's poems, of Horne's 'Orion,' and of Hawthorne, Hood, Macaulay, Captain Marryat, and the forgotten humourist, Henry Cockton: wrote them, and, for the most part, wrote them well—taking much more pains to master his subject than the ordinary reviewer thinks worth while, and writing with much more of liveliness and candour. But, though he gave clear proof of aptitude for criticism, he was deficient in the necessary training—a fact which is made apparent by his defiance of authority and depreciation of the greatest masters—of Milton, for example, and of the Greek dramatists. It is conceivable that frankness such as this might be in some circumstances engaging; but when Poe writes, as he does, of Sophocles being 'beguiled into applause' of the Œdipus † (which he obviously supposes to be the work of Æschylus), or asserts that 'for one Fouqué there are fifty Molières,' ‡ then our confidence in his judgement is shaken, and we begin to question not only his information, but his sense of proportion and perspective. So we shall scarcely be unjust if we sum up his critical work by characterising it as extremely clever but occasionally crude. More interesting, perhaps, than his judgements on other writers, though still doubtless mainly interesting for the light cast on his own practice and his own temperament, are those articles in which he seeks to investigate

* P. 59. † Works, vol. iv. p. 65, Ingram's edition.
‡ *Ibid.* vol. iv. p. 132.

the Principles of Poetry.* Though some of the positions here taken up can be shown to be indefensible, these essays embody the play of a fresh and brilliant mind over a subject into which it had special insight. And where Poe errs, it is generally through immaturity; or, in other words, through mistaking for final and universal what was merely personal to himself, or merely a stage in his developement.

If they had served no other purpose, Poe's critical writings would have served at least to prove that he was bent upon being original. As they owe little to authority, so they certainly owe nothing to conventional opinion or to other writers. In them Poe is scrupulously himself. And when we turn to his creative work, this characteristic is maintained. Only here, perhaps, there is apparent more of deliberate and self-conscious pose. Admitting that he had some affinity with De Quincey, and some with Hawthorne—some also with Beddoes, Professor Richardson thinks—it is still, we believe, impossible to establish a literary ancestry for Poe. And, admitting that a bias to the preternatural was in his case congenital, it is difficult to doubt that he deliberately made up his mind to turn this bias to the utmost account. In Poe's literary procedure, there was little—perhaps not enough—of room left for the fortuitous, for the 'inspiration' of the moment.' He plumed himself upon this fact; and his essay on the Philosophy of Composition, though, when taken literally, a tissue of extravagant falsehoods, is as regards his aims, wishes and beliefs, substantially true. It represents, that is, the 'Dichtung' as opposed to the 'Wahrheit' of the case. Well, it has been shown that Poe's early experience had disposed him to irony, even to perversity, in his manner of regarding life and his fellow-creatures. Grant that at the back of this there was inherent in him something of original eccentricity—something of what, in current terminology, is known as degeneracy, but which, since that term implies censure, we prefer here to describe as divergence from the type, and to regard from a purely scientific standpoint, not as a fault or a misfortune, but merely as a fact. Then what is remarkable in him is not his divergence from the type so much as his recognition of the same, and apparent immediate resolution to evolve strength out of essential weakness by turning that divergence to artistic account. And it is in his deliberate and uncompromising recognition of the part played by temperament in art that Poe's peculiar interest and significance for succeeding artists lies. He was, if not the

* The Poetic Principle; the Rationale of Verse; the Purpose of Poetry.

very first, at least one of the first in literature to aim consciously at giving his readers what he himself and no one else could give them. Whether in so doing he successfully steered clear of the initiator's pitfall, exaggeration, it is for his readers to judge.

The first result, then, of the resolution described above was that, when starting on his career as a story-teller, Poe turned his back upon the beaten track to choose a path that should be his own. From the conventional love-tale, the idyll, the fireside story, the novel as a picture of life as we would wish it to be: from all these accepted varieties of current literature, he once for all averted his gaze. And, by so doing, he almost of necessity turned his eyes from ordinary life—from its commonplace events and accidents, its common but sacred joys and sorrows, its affections, pieties and duties. And, having done this, he set out on his solitary journey into a country, not indeed quite untrodden hitherto, but into which he was to penetrate further than any man had done before, and which by right of conquest he was to make his own for ever. That domain may be defined as being bordered on the hither side by the province of the Marvellous, as enclosing the region of Mystery, and having as its core or centre that of Horror sheer and stark. Now, in making this election of the sinister—in yielding himself up to the fascination of the terror that walketh by night, of gloom, death, madness and decay—Poe must certainly have placed himself as regards the reader of his own day in a position similar to that of one who boldly claims Evil for his Good. As for the marvellous and the mysterious, these, perhaps, might pass unchallenged, having already won popularity for the romances of Ann Radcliffe and 'Monk' Lewis. But, though the passion of horror, too, had been turned to account, not only by Shakespeare but in a manner more to Poe's mind by Webster and Kyd, it requires to be borne in mind that these writers had employed it primarily for purposes of artistic relief, and consistently in scenes remote from actual experience. It was reserved for Poe to make of it his staple commodity, and in some cases to heighten ghastliness by exposing its close contact with daily life. There is perhaps no greater tribute to his talent than the acknowledgement that, out of much that is in its nature repellent, he has educed much that fascinates, and does so by legitimate means.

The story which, by winning the prize in a literary competition, first brought Poe into notice was that of the 'Manuscript found in a Bottle,' published in 1832. It was followed by 'Arthur Gordon Pym' in 1838, and by the 'Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque,' two volumes containing twenty-five stories, in 1840, or the end of 1839. Of the last named,

most, if not all, had already appeared in magazines. It will in this place be most convenient to group the stories according to their characteristics rather than to their chronology, and there will be the less objection to this because evolution, or regular developement, is not a strikingly noticeable feature in Poe's literary history. First, then, though entirely destitute of the sense of humour, he wrote a number of comic tales. These are, as might be expected, of a singularly harsh effect. The tale of 'The Spectacles'—in which a short-sighted youth, of amorous inclination, pays his addresses to his own great-great-grandmother—may be taken as a specimen of Poe's taste in farce. It is ingenious certainly. Of a yet more sardonic quality is the laughter (if any) provoked by 'Hop-frog,' by 'Four Beasts in One,' by 'Never Bet the Devil your Head'; while, in order to find a parallel for the coarse fooling of 'Why the Little Frenchman Wears his Hand in a Sling,' it would be necessary to ransack the obscure collection of literary mummies, the dark deposit of dramatic detritus, which is known to the world as French's Library. Uniformly ugly as are the stories here named, they serve the purpose of detaching and developing Poe's literary physiognomy—not perhaps as we would like it to be, but as it is. 'King Pest' is almost the only one of his tales to which Poe gave an historical background—the scene being laid in the London purlieus of the Thames, in the plague year of Edward III.'s reign. It exhibits an extravagant fantasy of hideousness, which recalls on the one hand some of Hogarth's work, and on the other the Burns of 'The Jolly Beggars' and of 'Tam o' Shanter,' and which serves at least to raise it to much higher rank than the stories before mentioned. Having disposed of his essays in a style which gave no room for the display of his higher qualities, our task becomes pleasanter. 'The Unparalleled Adventure of one Hans Pfaall' and 'A Descent into the Maelström' are typical examples of those studies in the marvellous in which Poe calls in the aid of science, or at least sham science, to make the impossible seem true. This device, which he claimed as original,* but which he did not care to turn to full account as less fertile writers might have done, was afterwards exploited with great success by the French author, Jules Verne. In the narrative of Pfaall's voyage to the moon to escape his creditors—the most elaborate of Poe's stories in this style, and a masterpiece in its own way—astronomical erudition, nicety of language and plausible invention are employed with consummate effect. Nor, though keenness and lucidity of intellect are the

* Woodberry, p. 83.

qualities most in evidence, do the power and wildness of the author's imagination here entirely fail to find scope. It is to this effect, for instance, that the Dutchman, as he soars, preconceives the goal of his journey :

'Fancy revelled in the wild and dreamy regions of the moon. Imagination, feeling herself for once unshackled, roamed at will among the ever-changing wonders of a shadowy and unstable land. Now there were hoary and time-honoured forests, and craggy precipices, and waterfalls tumbling with a loud noise into abysses without a bottom. Then I came suddenly into still noonday solitudes, where no wind of heaven ever intruded, and where vast meadows of poppies and slender lily-looking flowers spread themselves out a weary distance, all silent and motionless for ever. Then, again, I journeyed far down into another country, where it was all one dim and vague lake, with a boundary-line of clouds.'

This grandiose and unearthly landscape is as impressive in effect as are those of Poe's poems of 'Dreamland' and 'The 'City in the Sea'; and it is by passages such as this, or as the description of the lightning-flash seen from the balloon,* that adventure-stories of this type are raised into a higher sphere than that of mere ingenuity. In his tales of mystery, Poe stands upon even more congenial ground. Among these, the admirably narrated 'Gold Bug' is the classic example of a tale of patience, labour and acumen directed to the following up of clues. It is not necessary to be widely read in Stevenson's work in order to recognise from whom he had learnt the art of tale-writing. Scarcely inferior to this masterpiece is 'The 'Murders in the Rue Morgue,' with its bold invention and ghastly suggestion—the murders, as will be remembered, being perpetrated by a monster in the form of an orang-outang which has made its escape from its keeper. In 'The Mystery of Marie 'Roget,' the author mercilessly satirises the combined officiousness and obtuseness of official and amateur detectives ; and every one of these stories is related with a circumstantiality in the matter, and a conviction, a gusto, a bravado in the manner, which are positively irresistible. But perhaps the most brilliant example of this class is the story of 'The Purloined Letter.' Few who have once read it will have forgotten how the author here supposes a highly compromising document to have been stolen and deposited in a certain house, which is often left unguarded. Two detectives undertake the search for it. Of these, the first proceeds by rule of thumb—probes the building,

* Works, vol. i. p. 61.

pierces the furniture, square inch by square inch, and discovers nothing. The second detective—Poe's *alter ego*, Monsieur Dupin—is of another kidney. He begins his work by considering the mental constitution of the concealer of the letter. And, this done, he enters the principal room in the suspected house, and triumphantly lifts the missing paper from the letter-rack on the mantelshelf. Knowing with whom he has to deal, he has taken his measures accordingly. Here, as in all that is best in fiction, the story rises above the limits of a mere romance ; for it serves as a telling illustration of the contrast between the two perennial types of mind : the plodding and the intuitive. Among Dupin's innumerable progeny, perhaps the latest to attract attention is Monsieur Leroux's Rouletabille of the ' Mystery of the Yellow ' Room.'

Poe's tales of pure horror may be said to divide themselves naturally into studies of the physical and of the psychological varieties of the passion. Of the first, the rat-infested cell of ' The Pit and the Pendulum,' and the bloodshed and sufferings on the brig ' Grampus,' in ' Arthur Gordon Pym,' are in their own way powerful examples. From the latter story—which is Poe's longest effort and perhaps the best sea-yarn ever written by a landsman—may be cited, also, the following penetrating analysis of the agony of suspension over space. The incident described is the descent of a cliff :

' . . . Presently I found my imagination growing terribly excited by thoughts of the vast depth yet to be descended, and the precarious nature of the pegs and soapstone holes which were my only support. It was in vain I endeavoured to banish these reflections, and to keep my eyes steadily bent upon the flat surface of the cliff before me. The more earnestly I struggled *not to think*, the more intensely vivid became my conceptions, and the more horribly distinct. At length arrived that crisis of fancy, so fearful in all similar cases, the crisis in which we begin to anticipate the feelings with which we *shall* fall—to picture to ourselves the sickness, the dizziness, and the last struggle, and the half-swoon, and the final bitterness of the rushing and headlong descent. And now I found these fancies creating their own realities, and all imagined horrors crowding upon me in fact. I felt my knees strike violently together, while my fingers were gradually yet certainly relaxing their grasp. There was a ringing in my ears and I said, " This is my knell of death ! " And now I was consumed with an irrepressible desire of looking below. I could not, I would not, confine my glances to the cliff ; and with a wild indefinable emotion, half of horror, half of a relieved oppression, I threw my vision far down into the abyss. For one moment my fingers clutched convulsively upon their hold, while, with the movement, the faintest possible idea of ultimate escape wandered like a shadow

through my mind—in the next my whole soul was pervaded with a *longing to fall* ; a desire, a yearning, a passion utterly uncontrollable. I let go at once my grasp upon the peg, and, turning half round from the precipice, remained tottering for an instant against its naked face . . . '

It is consistent with the Heinesque spirit of mockery, of which Poe had his share, that this highly-wrought scene ends in anti-climax. It would have delighted the author of the ' English ' Mail Coach ' and of ' Murder as a Fine Art ' ; but De Quincey does not seem to have known Poe's work — or, at least, the collected writings of the English Opium-eater contain no reference to his colleague on the other side of the Atlantic. It must be acknowledged, however, that, first and last, pure physical horror—often that of the shambles or the charnel-house—had too strong a fascination for Poe. Though not perhaps the dominant motive, it is still by far too apparent in such studies of homicidal mania as ' The Black Cat ' and ' The ' Tell-Tale Heart '—stories whose ghastliness reaches the ultimate limit permissible in art. ' The Facts in the Case of Monsieur ' Valdemar ' describes, with fearful realism, the holding of a spirit in suspense by the power of mesmerism beyond the hour of dissolution. Poe's correspondent, Mrs. Browning, while withholding her admiration from ' The Raven,' confessed herself much impressed by this story ; but, though its execution is most masterly, its clinic details are repellent and its final effect is that almost of an outrage or impiety. Poe was not at all times studious to avoid shocking his readers. Even more terrific, though not open to the same objection, is the grimly realised catastrophe, heightened by a running fire of unctuous irony, of ' The Cask of Amontillado.' But, of all Poe's tales designed to make the flesh creep, the best is probably that which attains its end most simply, and most by means of suggestion, as opposed to assertion or insistence. This is the account of that weird and sinister figure whom the narrator dogs as a shadow, hour after hour, through the ever darkening streets and lessening traffic of a populous city by night.* At first speculation is active as to the object of the restless wanderer's peregrinations, but at last it is made clear that his sole and over-mastering motive is the dread of being left alone with his thoughts. Compared with the insight here displayed into dark places of the mind, the *coup de théâtre* of such a story as ' Thou art the ' Man ' is a mere mechanic art. In his studies of murder and madness Poe surpassed all competitors ; but it is a far higher

* The Man of the Crowd.

distinction to have surpassed them in this study of a haunted mind.

Of a rarer order of artistic merit than these are those tales in which Poe's object was the realisation of Beauty according to his own highly specialised conception of it. Among these, 'The Domain of Arnheim' and 'Landor's Cottage'—the first an accomplished success, the second a failure, if not indeed intended as a 'sell'—are little more than studies in pure landscape. 'The Assignation,' with its enthusiasm and romance, its artistic vagueness and swift tragedy; and the fervid, sombre and remorseful rhapsody, or allegory, called 'William Wilson,' have much more of story in them. The latter has a special personal and artistic interest from its painting in low tones, its exhibition as through 'glass darkly,' of the scenes of Poe's schooldays in England. Their distance doubtless lent them attractiveness, for the scenes and surroundings familiar to him are as a rule conspicuous by their absence from his writings.* There is, however, a group of tales—to which the scenes in 'William 'Wilson' lead by easy transition—which is perhaps more eminently and intimately characteristic of Poe than any of the stories earlier named. For in his studies of marvel, of mystery, and of crime, there is traceable something of his acquired defiant spirit, or perversity,—something of what we have ventured to call his pose—a certain *parti pris*, resulting of course from native temperament, but from native temperament acted upon by extraneous circumstances. In such stories, on the other hand, as 'Eleonora,' 'Morella,' 'Berenice'—stories, to adopt Woodberry's distinction, which he made purely out of dreams, as opposed to those to which acquired knowledge contributed: in these, we have, perhaps, a more essential product of Poe's genius. In these, incident and invention give way to pure imagination. They are for the most part as intangible, as elusive in effect, and as swift to vanish from the memory as are shadows thrown on mist; but, for all this, they possess a peculiar charm and beauty which no writer other than their author has succeeded in evoking. They stand thus apart from those of Poe's creations which have been imitated, and successfully imitated, by a Jules Verne, a Conan Doyle, or a Robert Louis Stevenson; they are something higher and rarer than these, though, assuredly, also less adapted for human nature's daily food. Of the stories of this class, the two most perfect specimens are 'Ligeia' and 'The Fall of the House of Usher,' in either of which Poe may be said to attain a complete artistic success.

* The scenery of 'The Gold Bug' is another exception.

Ligeia is a beautiful woman of great strength of will, much attached to her husband, a morbid and fantastic opium-eater, and on his account desiring life. She dies, and the widower, acting against his better judgement, contracts a second marriage, but loses his second wife also. Watching beside her corpse by night, in a solitary and singularly furnished room, he becomes aware of signs of returning animation in the departed ; who, after repeated attempts, at last rises to her feet to disclose the features, not of the second wife, but of Ligeia. In the conduct of so far-fetched and extravagant a fable as this, all depends of course on atmosphere, and the right atmosphere, as has been indicated, is here ideally realised and preserved. It is that of a haunted twilight, in which outline is lost and uncertainty prevails. The kindred story of 'The Fall of the House of Usher' suggests a subtle parallel between the slow mouldering of an ancient tenement and the gradual demoralisation of an ancient race. A comparison of this novelette with 'The House of the Seven 'Gables' will serve to detach the darkness of Poe's pessimism against the subdued but not hopeless colouring of Hawthorne's kindlier and saner philosophy. But, far from being repelled by the sombreness of his subject, Poe gloried and delighted in it. 'Eleonora' may be described as a prose version of the lovely poem of 'Annabel Lee.' In 'Berenice,' Poe has sought to employ horror as a foil to beauty. Whether he has done so with success or disastrous failure is a question which each reader will answer for himself according to his temperament. For points such as these are scarcely amenable to any tribunal more fixed than that of instinct. But, having admitted thus much, the writer is free to give expression to his own feeling that the climax of the story is a wanton outrage on the respect due to humanity. To suggest that Poe was capable of committing such an act with less repugnance than most other men would be to lay bare one of the blots or flaws in his unique organisation.

Throughout the stories here reviewed—and little of what is most distinctive in Poe's prose-work has, we trust, been omitted—there are noticeable two characteristics. Of these the first is that, in the greater number of them, if not indeed in all, by far the principal part of the action takes place during the night. A once notorious but now almost forgotten book bore the suggestive title of 'The Night Side of Nature' ; it is to this side of nature in much more than the strictly literal sense that Poe instinctively turns. The twilight which baffles others acts on him as an incentive ; he is at home in darkness, and his vision seems specially adapted for penetrating reserve and discerning what is shy or skulking. The second of the two characteristics referred

to is his preoccupation with the idea of Death and all its circumstances and trappings. Death may indeed be said to overshadow Poe's page, even as it overshadowed the earlier work of Maeterlinck. Death more than life, or at least life chiefly in its relation to death, constitutes his subject-matter. It is the thought of death rather than of life which sets the wheels of his genius a-working, and it is the adjuncts of death—the mortuary, the grave-worm and the interment—which furnish the favourite effects of his theatre. In this there is doubtless something that is deliberate, as well as much which, pardonable in Poe, would scarcely be so easily condoned in, or accepted from, another.

From stories such as 'Ligeia' and 'The House of Usher' the transition to Poe's poetry is easy. In both, that *indefiniteness* on which he so insisted is a dominant characteristic.

'Give to it [i.e. to musical expression] any undue decision,' he wrote, 'imbue it with any very determinate tone, and you deprive it at once of its ethereal, its ideal, its intrinsic and essential character. You dispel its luxury of dream. You dissolve the atmosphere of the mystic upon which it floats. You exhaust it of the breath of faëry. It now becomes a tangible and easily appreciable idea—a thing of the earth, earthy. It has not, indeed, lost its power to please, but all which I consider the distinctiveness of that power.' *

And though these words were used of music, they are almost equally applicable to those tales and poems in which he presents his conceptions floating, as it were, in an atmosphere of mellow shade. 'With me,' he wrote again, in the preface to his poems, 'Poetry has not been a purpose, but a passion,' adding that 'events not to be controlled' had prevented his making at any time any serious effort in what, under happier circumstances, would have been the field of his choice. But, though Poe produced little verse, and though much of that little was tentative or imitative, the fact of his possessing a clearly defined ideal of poetry which was exclusively his own has given to the nine or ten of his best poems a power and influence seldom attained by the work of more voluminous versifiers. His Theory of Poetry is not by any means defensible at all points. Accept it wholesale, indeed, and you will have to reject the 'Iliad' and 'Paradise Lost.' For, in Poe's view, a long poem was simply an anomaly.† He measured its possible dimensions by the power of the human nerves to sustain pleasurable excitation, and in his Philosophy of Composition inclines to fix the ideal length at one hundred lines. But, though he is palpably in error here, his error

* 'Marginalia,' Works, vol. iii. p. 457.

† 'The Poetic Principle,' Works, vol. iii. p. 197.

fortunately was not of a kind which must necessarily vitiate his practice. In his conception of the ' purpose of poetry ' he is in revolt against the view prevailing in his day. The purpose of poetry he holds is not Truth but Beauty, not to instruct but to delight. And, in order to delight by means of poetry, he asserts that a beauty beyond that of the world is required. Finally, he is content to define Poetry as the ' rhythmical creation of Beauty.' It is needless to add that these *obiter dicta* are of value only as they are Poe's, and as representing either the stepping-stones by which he attained to high poetic production, or (as is more likely) his deductions from his own practice.

In his early longer poems, 'Al Aaraaf ' and ' Tamerlane '—the latter written first, but being, in the form in which we have it, rewritten—Poe imitated Byron and the Shelley of the non-didactic portion of ' Queen Mab.' In other individual poems he has imitated Keats (' Science ! true daughter of Old Time thou art ! '), Moore (' I saw thee on thy bridal day '), Landor, and, we were about to add, the author of ' Italy.' But who would imitate Rogers ? And, in addition to these, there fall to be eliminated various acrostics and blank verse pieces ; for Poe, like Coleridge, lacked the mastery of what Southey pronounced to be the noblest of English measures. The scenes from ' Politian' are, however, much better drama than might have been expected to emanate from a poet so remote from humanity as Poe, and that he should elect to christen his Duke of Surrey ' Baldazzar ' is an eccentricity with which we need not quarrel. There now remain not much more than a dozen pieces, none of them long, by which to judge Poe as a poet. But these poems are a pure enchantment, a very quintessence of song and of their author's spirit, an embodiment of a beauty which is of the rarest, but is far too ethereal and too highly idealised to be described as rich. They vary between such poems as ' Dreamland ' and ' The City in the Sea '—poems whose appeal is largely to the eye—and others which depend for their effect mainly upon music. But whether they describe the mouldering city seen by the phosphorescence of waves, or the ambiguous luminosity of the ' corpse-candle ' in ' Ulalume,' their effect is ever infinitely delicate, infinitely imaginative, and of a marvellous efficacy to transport the reader away from the actual world into a shadowy No Man's Land of the spirit. No doubt there are times when Poe overdoes that indefiniteness upon which in his own opinion so much depended. In the poem ' For Annie,' for example, it is not quite easy to decide whether the emotion so exquisitely rendered represents the languor of convalescence, the self-surrender of dissolution, or the peace of the grave. Again, there are rhapsodies—the popular

'Bells' is one—in which sense is perhaps too deliberately subordinated to sound; in which we feel, as so often in the lyric of Swinburne, that the art of words is being subjected to methods proper only to the art of tones. Among the poems in which sound and sense are ideally mated, the lines addressed 'To 'One in Paradise' are more suited for quotation than 'Annabel 'Lee' only because they are less generally remembered :—

'Thou wast that all to me, love,
For which my soul did pine—
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine,
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers
And all the flowers were mine.

'Ah, dream too bright to last!
Ah, starry Hope! that didst arise
But to be overcast!
A voice from out the future cries,
On! on!—but o'er the Past
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies,
Mute, motionless, aghast!

'For, alas! alas! with me
The light of Life is o'er!
No more—no more—no more—
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar!

'And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy dark eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams—
In what ethereal dances!
By what eternal streams!'

The metrical liberties which the poet here allows himself are such as could only be used with success by a master of his art. Similar triumphs of verbal melody are the classic lines addressed 'To 'Helen,' 'The Haunted Palace,' with its dramatic transition, and 'The Conqueror Worm.' But to the world at large, Poe is the author of a single poem, 'The Raven'; and, this being so, it is rather a singular fact that that poem has been so often misunderstood. Mrs. Browning herself must have failed to understand it when she wrote to a correspondent that it made her 'laugh.' It will be best explained by recalling the circumstances which called it forth.

Poe was living at the time, in his usual dire poverty, on the outskirts of New York, and his young wife lay in the last stage of consumption.

'His love for his wife,' wrote one who visited them, 'was a sort of rapturous worship of the spirit of beauty which he felt was fading before his eyes. I have seen him hovering around her when she was ill, with all the fond fear and tender anxiety of a mother for her first-born, her slightest cough causing him a shudder, a heart-chill that was visible. I rode out one summer evening with them, and the remembrance of his watchful eyes, eagerly bent upon the slightest change of hue in that loved face, haunts me yet as the memory of a sad strain. It was the hourly anticipation of her loss that made him a sad and thoughtful man.' *

Alas! remorse for his own excesses must have lent a darker shadow to sorrow. It was in this frame of mind, then, that he conceived the incident of the midnight intrusion of the storm-tossed bird into his study, and the impassioned dialogue which follows, and what he meant by it seems to us to have been this. The soul of poetry is symbol. The raven, then—that mystic visitant, whose speech is enigma—is a symbol of the darkness which surrounds our human life, and the silence which returns no intelligible answer to the agonised questioner, demanding assurance of reunion with a loved one after death. Among readers there are doubtless some to whom, in view of the deep solemnity of its subject, the form of the poem may appear to incline too much to the theatrical. Others again there are for whom its ear-capturing rhythms are in themselves a stumbling-block. It was a thinker no less distinguished and a poet no less dull of ear than Emerson who dismissed Poe from notice as a 'mere jingle-man.' But, in spite of all this, the popularity of 'The Raven' is enduring and world-wide; and this of itself seems enough to prove that these verses express an authentic cry of the human heart and respond to a human need that is universal.

Virginia Poe died in 1847. Her husband survived her for two or three years, but those years were evil. Their chief work was the prose 'poem' of 'Eureka'—perhaps the least readable of all his writings. These years were also diversified by certain attachments—fleeting fancies, or imaginative passions—of which some of the ladies concerned in them have left naïvely complacent reminiscences. But Poe was the reverse of a Don Juan; he had excesses enough to answer for, but they were not of the amatory kind. There is no doubt that his heart was interred in the grave of his child-wife, and it is probably to one of these illusory fancies

* Stoddard's 'Life of Poe,' p. 111.

that he points in the highly ideal poem of 'Ulalume.' To him death came scarcely too soon. Drinking in a hell at Baltimore, he fell among rogues, and was carried dying to a hospital. Asked if he wished to communicate with his friends, he replied that his best friend would be the man who would put a pistol to his forehead. . . . Those were almost his last words. So, ignominiously, passed away much pride, much misery, some perversity, and one of the most original and finely organised of minds engendered during the nineteenth or any other century. It remains but to add an epitaph. If Poe is, as has been suggested, the Laureate of the Darkness, the soothsayer and interpreter of its secrets and sorrows, its terrors and portentous births, yet is he also the poet of the silver starlight, with its soothing stillness and its dreams, and of the soul thrown back upon itself to brood upon its own imaginings. Or, if we would vary the figure, let us say that, in the vast rambling palace of Imaginative Literature, with its splendid halls and galleries and pleasant homely apartments, there is one haunted room. Some will shun that room as they would shun infection; others will hanker after it, as after forbidden fruit. But over all alike its name will exercise a spell. Amid the twilight shadows of that room, in its ambiguous silence, what nameless shapes, what whispers, and what footfalls may not be surmised? Its windows open ever upon blackness; it is the antechamber to the unknown. And above the lintel of its doorway is inscribed the name of Poe.

His works will not always be approved, but we believe that they will always be read.

Art. X.—L'EMPIRE LIBÉRAL.

L'Empire Libéral. Études, Récits, Souvenirs. Par Emile Ollivier. Vol. XIV. : La Guerre. Paris: 1909.

The fourteenth volume of 'L'Empire Libéral,' issued in 1909, carries M. Emile Ollivier's very interesting reminiscences of that eventful period up to the outbreak of the Franco-German war in July 1870. It contains many curious particulars of the incidents and transactions culminating in the rupture with Prussia that brought about the downfall of his ministry and the ruin of the Second Empire. Autobiographies by men who have taken a prominent part in the momentous scenes which they describe have often the powerful effect of a dramatic representation: the actors reappear on the stage; they plead for themselves; they give vivid impressions of the scenes; they repeat the very words that were spoken; they revive the intense emotion of the audience during the contest between those who are hurrying on toward some fatal catastrophe and those who are striving to prevent it. M. Ollivier's volume is the story of a great historic tragedy; the principal *dramatis personae* are celebrities of the first rank; on their speech and action depend the destinies of France, and the spectators are the nations of Europe. If we make due allowance for the fact that the author's main object is to explain and defend the part which he himself played in these important affairs, we may credit him with an honest desire to set a strange, complicated, and oft-told story in a clear light before the present generation.

M. Ollivier cites, in the first page of this volume, Machiavelli's observation that mankind at large judges those who give advice in affairs of state not by the wisdom of their counsels but by the results. He agrees that this method is not rational, looking to the haphazard course of human affairs, but he admits that the multitude can judge by no other standard; and he appeals to historians for an impartial revision of the popular verdict, founded on careful examination of the real facts and circumstances. Yet he fears lest in his own country the decline of patriotic enthusiasm, the cooling of military ardour, that he notices in France at the present time, may have rendered Frenchmen incapable of realising the hot resentment, the intense susceptibility to affronts, the element of heroism, which were dominant forty years ago in the national character. And he therefore has little or no expectation that the falsehood of legends which have been circulated regarding the events of 1870 will be proved, to his

countrymen, even by the most irrefragable demonstration. All political parties in France, he says, have combined to hold their own ministry responsible for that calamitous war; he despairs of obtaining from them a hearing. He awaits with resignation the time when some inquisitive student of history may light upon a dusty copy of his book in the recesses of a library, and may set himself to explain how these things actually happened to readers of the future.

The story of the decline and fall of the second French empire has often been told; yet it may be worth while to remind English readers of the political situation in France just forty years ago. The Emperor Napoleon III, importuned by reformers and reactionaries, by those who pressed him to step forward into Liberalism, and by those who insisted that he must stand still, had at last decided upon making those changes in the form of his government that inaugurated the Liberal Empire; and on January 3, 1870, the new ministry took office, supported by the good will of the moderate party in the Chamber of Deputies and by the general approval of the country. M. Ollivier was recognised as its leader and spokesman, chosen by the emperor, and enjoying his particular confidence; though he was not prime minister in the English constitutional sense, for the power of issuing direct orders, and of overruling the cabinet, was still reserved to the sovereign; nor was he always consulted in important military or foreign affairs. The complex and enigmatic character of Napoleon III is becoming gradually intelligible to the world at large, and public opinion has lately been veering round to a less unfavourable conclusion upon it than heretofore. He had long been reviled as a truculent despot, artful and dangerous, powerful and perfidious; the genius of Victor Hugo had set on him a brand of infamy. In reality, if we may trust later French writers, there was much that was good in his nature, and they are disposed to regard him with compassion. M. de la Gorce says that throughout his life Napoleon had been a humane prince. From the entertaining memoirs of General du Barail, whose military services brought him into frequent relations with the emperor, we should draw the impression that the emperor was affable, considerate, and sincerely well-intentioned. Giuseppe Pasolini, the Italian statesman, found him simple and easy in conversation, naturally right-minded and kindly,* though weak and irresolute. He was equally capable of forming bold projects or adopting cautious decisions; but he was apt to hesitate and turn round at the moment for action;

* 'Animo retto e buono' (Memorie, p. 407.)

and it was just here that he was so unlike his uncle, Napoleon I, who would have classed him among the *idéologues* whom he despised. He invented the theory of nationalities to justify his polity of encouraging the unification of Italy, and of permitting the aggrandisement of Germany; in the former instance he alienated the Italians by refusing obstinately to allow them to occupy Rome; in the latter case his neutrality when Prussia attacked Austria in 1866 was the proximate cause of his ruin. He might have read in Machiavelli's 'Principe' a warning of the danger of standing aside when the neighbouring potentates come to blows. The result, it is there said, is that the winner in such a contest becomes doubly formidable, while the loser resents your neutral attitude, and will not help you when the victor turns upon you with all his strength. Machiavelli declares that this policy has always been *perniciosissimo*; and so it proved to be in the case of the French Empire. In domestic affairs also the Liberal Empire took up a kind of halfway position, which was assailed by the extreme parties on both sides; for thoroughgoing Imperialists like Rouher asserted that a Napoleon could only rule by retaining absolute authority; while uncompromising Liberals demanded full parliamentary control. Ollivier's ministry took office with the avowed object of gradually extending constitutional administration; but he found that, as Tocqueville had said in his 'Ancien Régime,' the most dangerous moment for an absolute government is when it endeavours to introduce reforms.

General du Barail, in the memoirs already quoted, gives M. Ollivier full credit for his honesty, ability, and sincere patriotism in undertaking his difficult task, which was begun in an evil hour, and failed through adverse circumstance. In May 1870, Ollivier, who was holding the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, transferred it to the Duc de Gramont, foreseeing no troubles abroad, and desiring to give his whole attention to politics at home. The external policy of the ministry was decidedly pacific; they relied on a quiet moment for developing the new constitutional system; they had no notion of changing horses in mid-stream, yet most unluckily they were caught by a sudden flood. At the end of June it was announced in Madrid that Leopold of Hohenzollern, son of the Roumanian prince, had accepted the crown of Spain that had been secretly offered to him by Marshal Prim; and the news, M. Ollivier says, startled all France like the bursting of a bomb. It had always, we must remember, been a cardinal maxim of French statesmanship that the maintenance of a preponderant influence in Spain was essential to the security of France; while, on the other

hand, a complete subordination of Spanish to French interests has been held by other governments to be dangerous to the balance of power in Europe. The collision between these two principles had been the cause of great wars and diplomatic quarrels. Louis XIV only succeeded in securing the Spanish throne for his grandson after a long war. When Napoleon I made his nefarious attempt to impose his brother on the Spaniards as their king, his pretext was that under the Bourbon dynasty Spain had always been a dependency of France; and it had been the invariable aim of English policy to prevent a close association of the two kingdoms. The question had long been regarded on all sides as one of vital importance; and in 1869, when some information of secret negotiations between Bismarck and Marshal Prim had leaked out, the French ambassador at Berlin, Benedetti, had warned Bismarck that France would oppose the election of a Prussian prince to the vacant throne of Spain. Bismarck had treated the information as an improbable rumour, yet he had carefully abstained from a formal assurance that the king would forbid Prince Leopold to accept any such offer.* It was therefore quite certain that in 1870, when the relations between France and Prussia were in a very critical state, the announcement that Prince Leopold had been chosen for Spain would be treated as a most threatening move on the political chessboard. Italy was under deep obligation to Prussia for aid in expelling the Austrians from Venice; the St. Gothard railway had been openly promoted and subsidised by Germany for direct and secure communication with Italy in case of need; and now the family connexion which was obviously contemplated would bring Spain into the circle of alliances that Bismarck was drawing round the French frontier. It was a strategical manœuvre that the imperial government was bound to resist. Within France all factions were for once unanimous in demanding immediate and resolute protest; and the clerical party, very powerful in that country, were especially vehement in denouncing the project of placing the scion of a great Protestant dynasty on the 'throne of Charles V.' M. Ollivier tells us that when the news first reached him it brought upon him suddenly and painfully the presentiment of impending war, to the discomfiture of all his efforts for the preservation of peace until the Liberal Empire should have been consolidated in France.

The plot—for it was nothing less—had been skilfully concerted between Berlin and Madrid; and even the parts to be played in anticipation of French remonstrances had been rehearsed.

* Benedetti, 'Ma Mission en Prusse.'

When Benedetti went to the Berlin Foreign Office for explanations, he found that Bismarck was absent at his country house and the king at Ems ; and Von Thiele, the Under-Secretary, cut short his interrogation by replying at once that the Prussian government knew nothing of, and had no concern with, the Hohenzollern candidature, adding that the Spanish people had a right to choose their own king. At Madrid, notwithstanding the French ambassador's attempts to check Prim's jubilant activity, Leopold's acceptance of the crown was proclaimed to all the foreign courts as a matter for joyful congratulation ; and the Cortes were summoned for July 20 to elect their new monarch. To demand satisfaction from Spain would have been to fall into Bismarck's net ; for the Hohenzollern prince would have been elected nevertheless, and if French troops had then marched into Spain the Prussian army would have crossed the Rhine, whereby the French would have been placed between two fires. It was necessary to fix the responsibility for these proceedings upon Prussia, and to act promptly ; but the precise line to be adopted was the subject of anxious deliberation in the emperor's council—that is, in a meeting of the cabinet presided over by him. Finally, Ollivier proposed, as he has told us, to speak out so plainly that Prussia must understand France to be in earnest, and to say that the Hohenzollern could not be permitted to reign at Madrid. Marshal Le Bœuf had assured the council that the army was in the highest condition of efficiency and readiness ; and when M. Ollivier inquired whether, in the event of war, any help from other governments could be relied upon, Napoleon produced certain letters from the Austrian emperor and the King of Italy, which he interpreted as distinct assurances of armed support in the case of a rupture with Prussia. The wording of a declaration to be made before the French Chamber of Deputies was carefully settled—it was delivered next day (July 6) by the Duc de Gramont, and received with immense enthusiasm. Some objection was taken, then and afterwards, to its menacing tone ; but we may agree with M. Ollivier that this outspoken warning to Prussia was at the moment judicious and effective ; and we may admit that up to this point no exception could be taken to the procedure of the French government.

M. Ollivier dates from July 6 the first of five phases, or alternating changes (*péripéties*), which the diplomatic campaign, as he terms it, traversed in its headlong course. They are successively described and commented upon in the chapters of his volume ; and they may be here set down in his own language, for the

guidance of our readers through the complicated transactions that ensued :

'Le premier moment est la déclaration ministérielle du 6 juillet ; le second, la renonciation du Prince Antoine (11 juillet) ; le troisième, la demande de garanties de la droite (12 juillet) ; le quatrième, le soufflet de Bismarck et la fabrication de la dépêche d'Ems ; le cinquième, notre réponse au soufflet de Bismarck par notre déclaration de guerre du 15 juillet.'

These are, in fact, the five acts of a portentous drama, full of shifting scenes and striking situations, on the issues of which depended the fortunes of France and of Germany ; it was played out with ill-omened rapidity in nine days. In regard to the train of causes and consequences that brought France to the tremendous disaster upon which the curtain fell, diverse accounts have been given to the world by the leading actors—by M. de Gramont, by Bismarck, Benedetti, and, the latest by many years, by M. Ollivier. His narrative does raise somewhat higher the veil which has hitherto kept in partial obscurity certain dark corners of the stage upon which these things went on. We know more now of the precise motives and considerations, the personal influences and impulses which diverted the Cabinet, after starting on the right path, into leaving it for rash and perilous adventures. On some points of interest he is, indeed, still reticent, and on others his evidence is in conflict with different narratives ; but in regard to facts actually known to him we may accept his testimony, though in matters of opinion we may sometimes differ from him.

M. Ollivier insists that Gramont's declaration of July 6 was altogether '*irréprochable*' ; he writes that he has read it again after so many years with satisfaction. He admits that it contained, substantially, an intimation to Prussia that she must choose between withdrawing the Hohenzollern candidate and accepting war with France ; but he argues that this straightforward and peremptory warning was justified by its effects ; that Bismarck was taken aback and discomfited by the resolute attitude of the French ministry, supported enthusiastically by the chamber of deputies ; and that Prince Antoine was thereby so intimidated as to compel his son Leopold to retract his acceptance of the Spanish crown. On the other hand, this stern language alarmed cautious deputies, and though it stirred Paris to a pitch of wild excitement it was read with uneasiness in the cooler air of the French provinces, where the prospect of imminent war met with scanty welcome.* The foreign governments were

* 'Papiers Secrets' : Les Préfets.

startled. Bismarck, in his 'Reminiscences,' says that it was an 'official international threat, uttered with the hand on the 'sword hilt.' From the Austrian chancellor, Count Beust, came earnest advice against marching hastily into Prussia; while the British cabinet, in particular, doubted the wisdom of taking up such high ground, from which it might be difficult to retreat, at the opening of a grave and complicated question. And our ambassador in Paris, Lord Lyons, whose calm judgement and friendly counsels M. Ollivier acknowledges unreservedly, exerted himself throughout this critical time to deprecate precipitate words and deeds.

Simultaneously Benedetti, the French ambassador at Berlin, had been ordered to seek an interview with the Prussian king, and to impress upon him the necessity of appeasing the just indignation of the French people by forbidding Leopold to accept the crown of Spain. The king replied, as is well known, that he had treated the candidature entirely as a family matter, quite apart from the sphere of international politics; that he had nevertheless communicated with Leopold, and could give Benedetti no positive answer until he should have heard from that prince. If, as has been asserted, the king had been cognisant of Bismarck's secret negotiations, this reply was more evasive than ingenuous; and we may note that he immediately directed his own ambassador, Werther, who was present at Ems, to return at once to Paris. M. Ollivier scores the king's order to the credit of Benedetti's diplomacy, since it amounted to an admission that the question in debate was much more than a mere family concern. And he adds that he immediately urged Gramont to allow no more equivocation upon this essential point, but to press Werther for a straightforward reply upon it. It will be seen that this pressure was carried rather too far at the French Foreign Office, with an important effect upon the course of negotiations.

But at this juncture supervened the *coup de théâtre*, as M. Ollivier styles it, which opens the second act of the drama. Olozaga, the Spanish ambassador at Paris, had been left in complete ignorance of the privy correspondence between Prim and Bismarck for procuring the nomination of a king from the Hohenzollern family, and this sudden revelation of its result by no means pleased him. He proposed to the Emperor Napoleon to despatch to Prince Antoine at Sigmarinden (in Prussian territory) an agent of his own, who should use every effort to convince the prince that his son must be imperatively commanded to withdraw his acceptance of Prim's offer. The emperor, whose sincere wish was for peace, consented willingly,

and the mission was entirely successful. By long and strenuous argument the envoy had finally persuaded the father that his son, Leopold, would find himself in a precarious position on the Spanish throne, with France alienated and openly hostile; and the result was that Prince Antoine not only laid on his son a positive consent to withdraw, but also telegraphed the decision to the principal German newspapers, to Olozaga at Paris, and to Madrid. According to M. Ollivier, Bismarck felt the blow keenly; it shattered his carefully organised plans; he found himself baffled and humiliated; he has himself said that his first thought was to resign office.* To the king, on the other hand, the news brought welcome relief; he supposed that he had now only to await Prince Antoine's letter confirming the public telegram, when the dispute would naturally drop with the disappearance of its cause. This was, moreover, the expectation at that moment of the French emperor, who observed that, if France and England were preparing to fight for the possession of an island in the Channel, it would be absurd to go to war after discovering that the island had sunk to the bottom of the sea.

In those days, M. Ollivier explains, any telegram of political interest that passed over the Paris wires was communicated, by special arrangement, to the *Ministère de l'Intérieur*; and accordingly he received a copy of Prince Antoine's message to Olozaga before it reached its address. The contents filled him with exultation—he could feel no doubt that peace had now been triumphantly secured, mainly by the unflinching tone of the cabinet's declaration. He carried the paper with him to the Chamber, where Olozaga rushed up to him in the lobby, drew him into a corner, read to him with much obvious excitement the telegram which Ollivier had already in his pocket, and hurried on to the Foreign Office. Naturally the incident aroused general curiosity; the deputies surrounded the minister, and eagerly pressed him for information. M. Ollivier tells us that he hesitated for some time before divulging his secret; but that on the whole he found no good reason for withholding news that would certainly appear within a few hours in the evening papers, so he read out the telegram to all present. We believe that few men, who had not been trained by experience to the cautious habits of official life, would have done otherwise. But M. de la Gorce † has pointed out that the chief minister ought to have kept silence until the renunciation had been approved and confirmed by the King of Prussia, who was in

* Reflections and Reminiscences of Prince Bismarck.

† Histoire du Second Empire, vi. 258.

hourly expectation of Prince Antoine's letter, and whose acquiescence, transmitted through Benedetti to the French government, would have probably brought the whole affair to an honourable termination. It may be objected that this is to argue from consequences, since known, which could hardly be foreseen at the moment; yet one must admit that reticence would have been preferable, for we have to remember that M. Ollivier was disclosing a telegram intercepted, so to speak, on its passage to a foreign embassy, thereby forestalling not only the Spanish ambassador but also the French Foreign Office.

The news ran round the *Palais législatif*, inside and outside, and spread through Paris with electrical rapidity.

'En même temps débouchait du Palais Législatif une bande agitée; c'était à qui envahirait les fiacres de la place, à qui les escaladerait, à qui les prendrait d'assaut. À la Bourse, criaient les hommes d'affaires; nous doublons le prix de la course, et au triple galop. Parmi les journalistes, même empressement et concert de même nature, et on voyait les haridelles de la place sortir l'une après l'autre et s'élancer rapides comme des flèches.'

Apparently all this stir and hurry had already affected M. Ollivier with some misgivings; for when, on going into one of the committee-rooms, he met Gressier, formerly a minister, he assured him that he (Ollivier) had no intention of making the renunciation a stepping-stone toward further demands. 'To take 'up that ground,' replied Gressier, 'will be a proof of courage, 'but it will bring down your ministry, for the country will never 'be content with this degree of satisfaction.' M. Ollivier soon found that he was right; for a crowd of deputies began to protest against the faint-heartedness of a government that seemed willing to drop the whole affair, leaving Prussia to escape scot-free; and M. Ollivier had scarcely entered the Chamber when Clément Duvernois rose with an interpellation asking what guarantees the cabinet proposed to require for the purpose of restraining Prussia from inventing more complications of this sort.

Olozaga had taken his telegram to M. de Gramont, who by no means shared M. Ollivier's joy over it. He observed that the effect was rather to embarrass his negotiations with Prussia, since that government could now make the renunciation a pretext for disowning the responsibility which he desired to fix upon the king with regard to the whole business; and, moreover, he added, public opinion in France would consider such a conclusion unsatisfactory. He was at that moment engaged in colloquy with Werther, the Prussian ambassador, who had

presented himself at the Foreign Office, where presently M. Ollivier joined them, Olozaga having departed. What followed is treated by some French writers as the most ill-conceived of all the false moves made by the French players in this hazardous diplomatic game. Gramont had been urging Werther to advise the Prussian king to write a letter to the emperor, to the effect that in authorising the acceptance of the Spanish throne by Leopold he had no idea of giving umbrage to France; that the king associated himself with the prince's renunciation, and hoped that all causes of misunderstanding between the two governments were thereby removed. Gramont sketched out what he thought the king might say, and actually made over his note to the Prussian ambassador, by way of *aide-mémoire*; precisely as in 1867 Benedetti had trusted Bismarck with his draft of the secret treaty proposed for the annexation of Belgium to France, which Bismarck afterwards published in the 'Times' of July 1870. M. Ollivier, who agreed with and supported Gramont, now maintains that his arrival changed the character of the conference, that it ceased to be an official interview between the Minister of Foreign Affairs and an ambassador, and thenceforward became merely one of those free unofficial conversations in which politicians explain their views without compromising their respective governments. But we are obliged to remark that in our judgement this plea is inadmissible, for M. de Gramont has explicitly stated that the interview, so far as he was concerned, was official,* and Werther could not have been expected to appreciate this subtle yet important distinction—of which nothing seems to have been said to him—while M. Ollivier should have foreseen that Bismarck would certainly ignore it. The result was that Werther did transmit to his king the suggestion of the two French ministers; that the king was deeply offended at having been required to send what he called, not unreasonably, a letter of excuses; that Bismarck used Werther's despatch to kindle national indignation throughout Germany; and that Werther himself was reprimanded and recalled.

The scene now shifts to St. Cloud, where the poor emperor, who had supposed that Prince Antoine's telegram signified peace with honour, found a military party eager for war, and hotly asserting that the empire would be totally discredited unless satisfaction were demanded from Prussia for conniving at the Hohenzollern candidature. The interpellation of Duvernois

* 'Rien n'était plus officiel que l'entretien qui se poursuivait en ce moment entre le ministre des affaires étrangères et l'ambassadeur de Prusse.' Gramont, 'La France et la Prusse,' p. 168.

in the Chamber was cited as a forcible expression of public opinion. M. Gramont now arrived at the palace with his report of the interview with Werther, in which the latter had persistently declared that the king had nothing whatever to do with Leopold's withdrawal. The emperor's unstable mind began to waver ; he forgot or put aside his arrangement with M. Ollivier—that the ministers should meet him next morning for consultation over this new aspect of the affair—and he proceeded then and there to hold a cabinet council.

What passed at this council has never been exactly known. The reproach of a ruinous blunder lies heavy on those who took part in it. Gramont says no more than that the deliberations were conscientious, and that every one, including the emperor, earnestly desired peace.* M. Ollivier tells us, in the volume now before us, that of all the cabinet ministers the Duc de Gramont alone was summoned; whether he learnt subsequently who were also present, and what share they took in promoting the decision, he leaves his readers to guess. It is clear that the proceeding was irregular and totally unconstitutional, and other French writers hint that Gramont's silence is intended to shield *une personne auguste* from responsibility for a decision that was fatally wrong. When the council broke up at 7 P.M. (July 12) Gramont immediately despatched from the Foreign Office his famous telegram to Benedetti at Ems, instructing him to require from the Prussian king a positive assurance that he would not authorise the renewal of Leopold's candidature—a demand, in short, for guarantees. At his office he met Lord Lyons, to whom he expounded his reasons for treating the single renunciation as inadequate, to the great surprise of our ambassador, who objected so strenuously to Gramont's views and intentions that the minister, somewhat shaken, merely said that the formal decision would be made public next morning. While the emperor and two councillors were then taking irrevocable steps toward a collision, and were unconsciously playing into the hands of their arch-enemy, the leaders of the warlike faction in the Chamber and the Parisian press were clamouring with fury and vitriolic sarcasm against a faint-hearted and contemptible ministry that shrank from seizing the opportunity of humbling Prussia.

Again the scene changes, this time to the Foreign Office, where M. Ollivier, in total ignorance of that evening's council at St. Cloud, sought and found the Duc de Gramont about midnight. He had come to ask whether any fresh news had been

* La France et la Prusse (1872), pp. 131–2.

received from Benedetti at Ems; and Gramont answered by showing him the telegram just despatched by the council's order to Benedetti, with a letter to himself from the emperor desiring that its language should be stiffened. Naturally M. Ollivier could hardly control his resentment at discovering that an extremely grave resolution had been adopted and acted upon without consulting or even warning him beforehand; that the emperor, in spite of his promises to govern constitutionally, had reverted to such an extreme use of autocratic power; and that Gramont had made no attempt to check it, had even abetted the irregularity. However, the telegram had gone to Ems—it was too late to remedy that mischief—but the cabinet would have to answer before the Chamber for its despatch. He said to Gramont:

'On va vous accuser d'avoir prémédité la guerre et de n'avoir vu dans l'incident Hohenzollern qu'un prétexte de la provocation. N'accentuez pas votre première dépêche comme vous le prescrit l'Empereur, atténuez la. Benedetti aura déjà accompli sa mission lorsque cette atténuation lui parviendra, mais devant la Chambre vous y trouverez un argument pour établir vos intentions pacifiques.' *

And he at once drafted a telegram instructing Benedetti to require from the king no more than that he should agree not to permit Leopold to retract the particular renunciation which his father had obtained from him; instead of requiring a general assurance against *any future* retractation. Gramont telegraphed accordingly, but in continuation, not in correction, of his earlier message, so that the latter part of the instructions to Benedetti was inconsistent with the former part. But this second telegram reached Ems, as M. Ollivier had foreseen, too late, for Benedetti had already seen the king, and had been urging him persistently to satisfy the French government by conceding the general assurance.

M. Ollivier's description of the distress and perplexity that kept him without sleep during the rest of that eventful night will be read with a feeling of sincere commiseration. This, then, he reflected, was the first fruit of imperial liberalism, that the chief minister was slighted by his sovereign, ill-served and even betrayed by his colleagues, and committed, behind his back, to a most hazardous policy. He had been too soft-hearted to insist on making a clean sweep of the old official class in forming his cabinet; he had thought to replace the decrepit absolutism by a young and liberal empire; and here was the

* L'Empire Libéral, p. 270.

personal power reappearing at the first crisis. The idea of having given the signal for war was abhorrent to him; he felt violently tempted to resign and retire. Yet, on reflection, to tender his resignation at such a moment would be, he felt, an act of culpable egoism, it would inevitably bring on the war; for the government would pass into the hands of a rash and impetuous war-party, manifestly bent on marching against Prussia if the king persisted in refusing, as on hearing of Ollivier's resignation he would assuredly refuse, the guarantees that had been demanded by the council held at St. Cloud. On the other hand, by remaining in the ministry he might still command a majority in the cabinet; nor did he despair of a majority in the Chamber to support him in cancelling, at some future stage of the negotiations, this demand for guarantees if he could recover the emperor's confidence. He might fail, but then he would fall honourably, having subordinated personal susceptibilities to considerations of his country's interest; so he finally determined not to resign office.

Our sympathies are unquestionably due to a minister who, finding himself placed, by no act of his own, in a situation of the utmost perplexity, resolves to take no account of his political reputation and personal interests, and to choose the course that he believes to be necessary, in arduous circumstances, for the honour and safety of his country. To a British prime minister his duty would have been clear, he would have tendered his resignation immediately; but under the Liberal Empire the ultimate decision upon questions before the cabinet still lay with the sovereign, and thus the responsibilities of his principal minister remained ambiguous and indefinite. Nevertheless, though it is easy to be wise after the event, our opinion must be that M. Ollivier would have done his country better service by resigning office; for though it is very probable that war could not have been thereby averted, yet unqualified disapproval of the demand for guarantees might have rallied to his side all those who, in the cabinet, the Chamber, and the country, were undoubtedly opposed to incurring terrible risks in order to obtain pledges against future contingencies. Among the late Lord Acton's Historical Essays there is a remarkable paper on 'The Causes of the Franco-Prussian War,' in which the considerations that may justify Gramont's demand for guarantees are fairly stated. It is there argued that the Prussian king, who had first 'sanctioned' Prince Leopold's candidature, and afterwards its withdrawal, had left the initiative in both cases to Prince Leopold. He had thus kept himself quite free to sanction a second acceptance as he had done the first—'he held in his hands

'a convenient *casus belli*, to be used or dropped at pleasure'; remembering that the Hohenzollern candidature had been 'a 'meditated offence, long and carefully prepared, insolently denied, which demanded reparation.'* But one might reply that the best way of foiling these deep and deliberate designs, manifestly contrived to provoke war, was to give the adversary no such plausible pretext for driving France into hostilities as was furnished to Bismarck by Gramont's demand. It is evident, however, that in July 1870 all Paris was in a state of irrepressible agitation, that the Imperialists in the Chamber were determined to push the government into a defiant and warlike policy, and that they were acting in the foolhardy conviction that the French army could beat the Prussians, and that a victorious campaign would consolidate the Napoleonic dynasty.

The next day, July 13, is an evil date in the history of France, when she was hurried into war by a swift succession and very unlucky conjunction of incidents. The council met early, and decided by a majority not to call out the Army Reserves, although Marshal Le Bœuf energetically declared that if there were any prospect of war, not an hour should be lost in preparation. M. de la Gorce relates that four of the councillors passed grave censure on the irregular proceedings of the previous evening; and condemned Gramont's telegram. M. Ollivier says that it was resolved not to insist further if the guarantees were refused by the king, and for the moment to keep the demand for them secret, merely informing the Chamber that negotiations with Prussia were in progress. Ollivier took his *déjeuner* at the palace, where the household staff greeted him very coldly, and the Empress, by whom he sat, turned her back on him. In the Chamber Duvernois asked in a surly tone when the debate on his interpellation would come on, and July 15 was fixed for it. Everything now depended on the issue of Benedetti's interview with the king at Ems, which took place early on the morning of the 13th, when they met as the king was returning by the public promenade from taking the waters. What followed is well known. The king was surprised and disappointed at learning from the ambassador that Prince Leopold's resignation had not settled everything; Benedetti pressed on him Gramont's new demand for ulterior guarantees; the king positively refused to give them, and parted from him coldly though courteously, promising, however, to see him again after receiving the letter expected from Prince Antoine. But in the course of that day came Werther's report of his conversation with the two French

* Historical Essays, p. 222.

ministers, which the king's private secretary opened and carried, in some trepidation, to his majesty. The king was grievously offended; he wrote to Queen Augusta that to require him to stand before the world as a repentant sinner was nothing less than impertinence, and he sent his aide-de-camp, Prince Radziwill (one of the highest Prussian nobles), to inform Benedetti that Leopold's letter of resignation had arrived, and that, as the affair was thus completely ended, no further audience was necessary. The ambassador replied that he was particularly instructed to obtain the king's specific approbation of Leopold's action, and was therefore obliged to solicit another interview. The king replied by his aide-de-camp that so far as he had approved Leopold's acceptance of the crown he approved the retractation; but the request for another interview, though it was twice repeated during the day, was civilly and firmly refused.

M. Ollivier argues that Werther's report in no way affected the king's behaviour to Benedetti; he affirms that it made no difference at all, and that the king's determination to hold no further intercourse with him was entirely due to Benedetti's indiscreet importunity at the morning's meeting, which was witnessed, it may be noted, by a crowd of observant bystanders. We may assume that the king had at no time the slightest intention of acceding to the demand for guarantees; but it seems to us impossible to maintain that Werther's report, which was put into his majesty's hand at such a critical moment, and which undeniably gave serious offence, did not exacerbate relations which had already been strained, or induce the king to break off abruptly the personal negotiations with the French minister. And we may add that if Benedetti had been cognisant of this report, he might have understood the king's sudden change of temper, and might have spared himself some rebuffs. When the matter came afterwards to his knowledge, he declared that the effect on the king of Werther's report had been deplorable.

Bismarck had been telegraphing from Berlin to Ems that if the king accorded to Benedetti any more interviews he must resign office; and the news of Prince Leopold's renunciation seemed to cut away the ground upon which he had been manœuvring for a quarrel with France. But his spirits revived on receiving by telegraph from the king a brief summary of the Ems incidents, stating that Benedetti's importunate requisition for guarantees had been rejected by his majesty, who had subsequently resolved

'de ne plus recevoir le comte Benedetti à cause de sa prétention, et de lui faire dire simplement par un aide de camp . . . que sa

Majesté avait reçu du prince Léopold confirmation de la nouvelle mandée de Paris, et qu'elle n'avait plus rien à dire à l'ambassadeur.'

The telegram also authorised Bismarck to communicate this statement to the foreign courts and to the press, whereupon Bismarck gave it immediate publication, having made (to use his own phrase) ' some suppressions ' ; having, in fact, maliciously tampered with the text and falsified the tone, according to M. Ollivier and other French writers. His official organ, the ' North ' German Gazette,' was directed to print off a supplement and to paste it up all over Berlin, and copies of this supplement were distributed gratis in the streets. A thrill of patriotic enthusiasm electrified the nation, who were unanimous in applauding the king in defying the French, and mocking at their ambassador's humiliation.

' Dans toutes les langues, dans tous les pays, courait la falsification offensée lancée par Bismarck. L'effet de cette publicité effroyable se produisit d'abord en Allemagne avec autant d'intensité qu'à Berlin. Les journaux faisaient rage.'

This is what M. Ollivier has called ' Le soufflet de Bismarck ' ; and never was the art of changing the tone and import of words without altering their substance more effectively employed ; for it must be acknowledged that the communication to the press was an accurate rendering of the facts contained in the king's telegram, which was stiff but not actually discourteous ; whereas Bismarck put the sting into it by little more than adroit condensation. We are told that when the king received this revised edition of his message he read it twice, was much moved, and said, ' This means war ' ; and that it rang throughout Europe like an alarm-bell. At the same time, and before Bismarck's action had been known in Paris, M. Ollivier, as he tells us, was struggling vigorously against the torrent of reproaches and imputations of cowardice which threatened to overthrow his cabinet if they flinched from the demand for guarantees.

Late on July 13 came a telegram from Benedetti that the king had consented to approve unreservedly Prince Leopold's renunciation, but distinctly refused any further concession. This, cried the war-party at St. Cloud, is totally insufficient ; the emperor was irresolute, and merely summoned his council for next day. Ollivier was determined, for his part, to accept the king's assurance as conclusively satisfactory ; and he relates how, on the morning of the 14th, he was engaged in drafting, for approval by the council, a ministerial declaration to that

effect, when the Duc de Gramont entered his room with a copy of Bismarck's circular telegram, and said :

' " Mon cher, vous voyez un homme qui vient de recevoir une gifle." Il me tend alors une petite feuille de papier jaune que je verrai éternellement devant mes yeux. . . . On n'échoua jamais plus près du port. Je restai quelques instants silencieux et atterré.'

At the council, which was immediately summoned, Gramont threw his portfolio on the table, saying that after what had happened a Foreign Minister who should not vote for war would be unworthy to hold office ; and Marshal Le Bœuf informed his colleagues that they had not a moment to lose, for Prussia was already arming. Nevertheless the council set themselves to a deliberate investigation of the actual facts. Their conclusion, after six hours of discussion, was that, according to diplomatic rule and international custom no exception could have been taken to the king's refusal, courteously worded, of the interview which Benedetti had, it seemed to them, rather pertinaciously desired ; but that a reasonable refusal had been converted into one that was offensive by its publication in terms that were intentionally curt and stinging. Nevertheless Ollivier, clinging to any slight chance of avoiding war, persuaded the emperor and the council to agree that Leopold's resignation, as approved by the Prussian king, should be accepted by France, and that, on the further question, whether members of a reigning family in one country could be permitted to become kings in another, an appeal for some authoritative ruling should be made to a general congress. But in the course of that day the ministers received from various quarters more evidence that Bismarck's inflammatory telegram had been sent officially to the Prussian diplomatists at all the foreign courts ; and they heard that Paris was literally foaming with exasperation at their dilatory indecision, while the temper of the Chamber convinced them that the proposal for a congress would be rejected with fiery scorn. Berlin and Paris vied with each other in turbulent patriotism and warlike fury, and Marshal Le Bœuf, being again and for the last time questioned by the council, replied positively that the French army was quite ready, and that no better opportunity of settling accounts with Prussia could be expected. The council rescinded its former decision, and voted unanimously for war. The empress alone (Ollivier notes particularly) expressed no opinion and gave no vote.

On July 15 Ollivier pronounced in the Chamber the declaration that had been drawn up by himself and the Duc de Gramont. It was to the effect that the cabinet had throughout made every

possible exertion to preserve peace, but that their patience was exhausted when they found that the King of Prussia had sent an aide-de-camp to the French ambassador informing him that no more interviews could be granted, and that the Prussian government, by way of giving point and unequivocal significance to this message, had circulated it to all other foreign governments in Europe. Having spared no pains to avoid war, the ministers would now accept the challenge, and prepare for the consequences.

M. Ollivier has given a vivid description of the scene that ensued. His final words were barely audible in the storm of applause that swept through the assembly, and the vote of urgency for the motion to provide the necessary war-funds was demanded with enthusiastic outcries, varied by angry vituperation of the few deputies who stood up to oppose it. But Thiers immediately arose and, in spite of many disorderly interruptions, made a passionate appeal to the assembly to reflect before precipitating the country into war. His speech, with the violent cries of dissent interjected by the war-party, is reproduced by M. Ollivier in order, as he says, that his readers may judge for themselves how far it merited the unstinted eulogy that has since been bestowed upon it; for M. Ollivier evidently considers that those who have credited Thiers with heroic patriotism in making this strenuous effort to avert the catastrophe have over-praised him. Yet with this view we believe that few of those who read the pages in this volume which contain the speech will agree. They will admire, rather, the courage and fervid eloquence of a veteran statesman who vainly strove to persuade a frantic assembly that it was fatally misled, that it was plunging the nation into war on a mere point of form, grasping at a shadow after the substantial and reasonable demand for satisfaction had been obtained by Leopold's renunciation; who reminded the deputies that the official papers authenticating the supposed insult had never been laid before them, and implored them not to risk the issues of a terrible contest upon a doubtful question of national susceptibility. M. Ollivier goes so far as to affirm that no one could be more justly accused of having brought on the war of 1870 than Thiers himself, because it was his vehement condemnation of the policy which allowed Prussia to beat down Austria in 1866, and to set up a formidable military power on the frontier of France, that inspired the whole French people with the suspicion, jealous animosities, and alarm which rendered a war on the Rhine between the two nations eventually unavoidable. But Thiers in his speech emphatically repeated his conviction that sooner or later France must fight Prussia to redress the balance of military power between the rival countries;

and the whole point of his speech lay in one sentence : ' Je trouve ' l'occasion détestablement choisie ' (' Your *casus belli* is ill ' chosen and utterly indefensible '). It cannot be denied that in 1870 the public opinion of Europe was on his side : for England and Austria, whose good will toward France was unquestionable, were foremost in their efforts to deter the French ministers from war and in deploring their infatuation when it had been proclaimed. At St. Petersburg the Russian emperor told the French ambassador plainly that the demand for guarantees was unreasonable. Nor is it likely that the general judgement of the time—that Thiers did his best to save the empire from a disastrous blunder—will have been revoked by posterity, or affected by anything that has since been pleaded in extenuation.

' If (said Thiers) the Hohenzollern candidature had not been ' withdrawn, all France would have rallied to the support of ' your declaration, and all Europe would have held you to be in ' the right ; but it *has* been withdrawn with the approbation of the ' Prussian king, and you had absolutely no pretext for making ' any further demand. What will Europe say when you shed ' torrents of blood on a point of form ? ' M. Thiers concluded his speech by urging the ministers to lay before the Chamber the actual documents which, as they asserted, rendered war inevitable.

M. Ollivier, in his reply, declined to communicate certain documents which, he said, were confidential and could not be produced without infringement of diplomatic rules ; and he laid stress on the impossibility of tolerating the affront which had been intentionally put upon France by Bismarck's circular telegram. And it was at the end of this speech that he made use of the phrase which has become historical as the typical expression of the levity and rashness with which his ministry threw their nation into a tremendous war, insomuch that it has become one main cause why he is so commonly charged, very unfairly, with the whole responsibility for the blind haste that led to the defeat and dismemberment of his country. ' Oui, ' de ce jour commence pour les ministres mes collègues et ' pour moi, une grande responsabilité. Nous l'acceptons le ' cœur léger.' The words were at once taken up sharply and severely ; and M. Ollivier went on to explain that he meant a heart not weighted by remorse, since he and his colleagues had done everything that was consistent with humanity and with honour to avert a dire necessity ; and since the armies of France would be upholding a cause that was just. He now comments bitterly on the malignity which has fastened this stigma on his name, merely because in the heat and flurry of debate, which

left him not a moment to pick his words or arrange his sentences, he said something that he is sure no honest man who listened to his explanation could misconstrue into unfeeling frivolity. And in his criticism of the speech in which M. Thiers so vehemently condemned the conduct of the ministers he repeats emphatically that the war was not brought on by the demand for guarantees, but by Bismarck's false and insulting publication of the king's refusal to consider that demand. This affront, he maintains, was insufferable. Yet we learn from his narrative that before entering the Chamber on this eventful day M. Ollivier had found at the Foreign Office Benedetti, just arrived from Ems, who had already seen Bismarck's telegram in a newspaper, and could have assured the ministers that it was a perfidious misrepresentation, since the king had not treated him with actual discourtesy. Nevertheless M. Ollivier quotes and entirely adopts the 'proud and manly' utterances of the Duc de Gramont, who stood up and addressed the assembly towards the close of the debate.

'After what you have just heard,' he said, 'one fact is enough. 'The Prussian government has informed all the cabinets of 'Europe of the refusal to receive our ambassador or to continue 'the discussion with him. That is an affront to the emperor and 'to France, and if (*par impossible*) a Chamber could be found in 'my country to bear or suffer it, I would not remain Minister 'of Foreign Affairs for five minutes.'

These haughty words (we are told) electrified the Chamber, and a committee to examine the papers on which the ministers relied to prove their case was immediately appointed. These were brought by Gramont, who, however, said that he could not lay before the committee the precise words of Bismarck's insulting telegram, because his knowledge of it came only from a very confidential communication made to him by the French representatives at certain foreign courts who had been permitted to see the original, so that the authentic text was not in his possession. This excuse was accepted, somewhat imprudently, by the committee; and their chairman proceeded to question Gramont closely on one point—whether, after Leopold's retirement had become known, the King of Prussia had been required at one and the same time to approve it formally and to promise that the candidature should never be revived. During the debate it had been objected by those who opposed the war-party that after obtaining the king's approval, and not till then, the Foreign Secretary demanded this promise, and that on this new demand the king took offence and briefly declined any further interview with Benedetti. Gramont answered the chairman

with a direct affirmative ; he stated that the two concessions had been required simultaneously, and M. Ollivier undertakes to prove that this statement was correct. He argues, if we understand him rightly, that before Leopold had withdrawn his candidature, the king had been pressed to advise or order him to do so, and that this requisition included by implication the demand for a guarantee against its renewal. When Leopold had retired without the king's intervention, the royal order became unnecessary ; but the implied demand still remained in force, and was merely repeated in subsequent telegrams.* On this we must remark that both Benedetti and the Prussian king entirely missed the alleged implication ; that the question of guarantees was never raised by the telegrams interchanged between Gramont and Benedetti before Leopold's retirement had become public, when both the king and the ambassador treated it as entirely new ; and that at any rate such an important and highly contentious demand should obviously have been stated with unequivocal distinctness, since any other course was quite certain to produce misunderstandings and recriminations. And it is no matter for surprise that various French writers have since accused the Duc de Gramont of misstating the facts upon which the committee reported to the Chamber that the papers laid before them amply sustained the ministerial request for the grant of an urgent war-subsidy, which was thereupon voted by an immense majority. In the Senate, where the money was granted with even more promptitude and with zealous unanimity, the proceedings were expedited by a report from Marshal Le Bœuf that the enemy had already crossed the French frontier, and M. Rouher, a thorough Imperialist, headed a deputation of senators to congratulate the emperor, in the name of the Senate, on having drawn the sword when the Prussian king rejected the demand for guarantees. M. Ollivier reasonably complains that this unauthorised demonstration was awkward and mischievous ; for while the Senate was thus made to attribute the rupture to the king's refusal, the ministry was declaring war on account of the 'soufflet de Bismarck'—the insult embodied in the Prussian telegram. Yet M. Ollivier, looking back in the calm evening of life on these stormy days, might have brought himself by reflection to admit that between these two pretexts there was little to choose—that neither of

* 'Au début nous avions demandé au Roi de conseiller ou d'ordonner à son parent de renoncer, ce qui entraînait implicitement une garantie que la candidature ne se reproduirait plus. Le Roi ayant refusé d'intervenir, et la candidature ayant disparu à son insu, nous avions réclamé, sous une forme explicite, notre première demande.' L'Empire Libéral, p. 453.

them justified a government in staking the fortunes of the nation and the empire on the hazard of a great war. When Rouher had read his address, the sovereigns conversed with the senators, and it was remarked that while the empress was lively and confident of success, the emperor spoke sadly of the long and difficult task, requiring a most violent effort, that lay before them.

Having brought his narrative up to the moment when the Chamber by voting the subsidy had practically determined upon war, M. Ollivier stops to comment upon and explain the strenuous opposition made to the vote by M. Thiers and by the small section of deputies who represented the Radical Left. He is convinced that this latter party were mainly actuated in their ardent protests by a desire to embarrass and, if possible, to overthrow his government, of which they had been consistent adversaries. They had calculated, he explains, on the probability that the ministry would flinch from the rupture with Prussia, would adopt some pacific compromise that would be rejected with indignation by the Chamber, and would be contemptuously expelled from office. When this calculation had been foiled by the resolutely courageous attitude of the cabinet, they foresaw (he believes) that a triumphant campaign would greatly strengthen the government and would utterly discredit the opposition, so they changed their tactics and fought against the ministerial proposals with accusations of criminal recklessness and prophecies of disaster. It is hardly possible, after so long an interval of time, to form any opinion upon these somewhat invidious suggestions. The action of those who opposed the war, whatever may have been their motives, was outwardly consistent enough, and the construction placed upon it by M. Ollivier may seem rather subtle and far-fetched. At the present day, however, this question does not particularly concern any one, though we may agree that at that moment no one in France contemplated the possibility of defeat in the field. The French army was assumed by all parties to be invincible, and the minority in opposition did undoubtedly believe and fear that the empire would be consolidated by victories. M. Thiers in his speech only touched generally upon the chances and perils of war, and even Gambetta voted with the government upon the conviction that success was beyond doubt; while not only in Paris, but in all the great towns, the determination to fight was acclaimed because a triumphant campaign was supposed to be certain. It was to be anticipated, indeed, that a brave and high-spirited nation, very sensitive on the point of honour, and confident in its military superiority, would respond enthusiastically to the signal of war against a rival whose ill will was notorious, who was

accused of plotting the injury of their country and of deliberately insulting their government.

A public declaration of hostilities was sent to Berlin, though M. Ollivier tells us that his ministry regarded it as a superfluous formality which they would have preferred leaving to Prussia.

'La déclaration fut libellée d'une manière assez maladroite par les commis des Affaires étrangères, et elle ne fut pas même lue au Conseil. Elle fut communiquée uniquement par la forme et sans discussion aux Assemblées, et envoyée à la Prusse le 19 juillet.'

This perfunctory method of composition is characteristic of the prevailing official atmosphere.

The document was delivered by the French chargé d'affaires to Bismarck, and in the dialogue that followed between the two diplomatists, which M. Ollivier relates in full, we have an excellent sample of the Prussian chancellor's sardonic and incisive manner. Bismarck asserted that if he had been present at the interviews with Benedetti he might have prevented the war, whereas the king's conciliatory tone at Ems had misled the French ministers into the blunder of using threats and making intolerable demands, until at last they found themselves confronted by a strong government, backed by the Prussian nation in the firm resolution to defend itself. In reporting this conversation to the Foreign Office the chargé d'affaires said that Bismarck appeared to be sincerely afflicted with regret for the rupture between the two countries, that he evidently saw, too late, his error in having secretly encouraged the Hohenzollern candidature, and that the result of all these unhappy complications had left the well-meaning chancellor inconsolable. Such a candid confession of remorse and regret moved the Frenchman's compassion to a degree that profoundly irritates M. Ollivier—

'Un tel excès de crédulité finit par exaspérer. Et la plupart des diplomates de ce temps-là étaient de cette force. Bien piètre serait l'histoire qui se modélerait sur leurs appréciations.'

We may agree that the sympathy of the chargé d'affaires with Bismarck's ingenuous contrition was ill-bestowed. But the tendency to fix upon French diplomacy a responsibility for national calamities that is much more justly chargeable to the account of the imperial government, is somewhat unduly prominent in certain parts of M. Ollivier's otherwise fair and conscientious narrative of the transactions that culminated in the war.

When Bismarck announced to the Prussian Reichstag that war had been declared, he was interrupted by an outburst of long and

enthusiastic cheering. He said, briefly, that he had no papers to lay before them, because the single official document received from the French government was the declaration of war; and the only motive for hostilities he understood to be his own circular *télégramme de journal* addressed to Prussian envoys abroad and to other friendly Powers for the purpose of explaining what had occurred. This, he observed, was not at all an official document. He added that a demand for a letter of excuses had been made through Werther to the king; and the real origin of the war he alleged to be the hatred and jealousy with which the independence and prosperity of Germany were regarded in France. Upon this adroit but incomplete exposition of causes and circumstances M. Ollivier comments with intelligible severity, laying stress on the fact that afterwards Bismarck threw off his disguise, and openly took to himself the credit of having deliberately contrived to bring on the war at his own time. In fact, the later German historians have confirmed this statement by their critical examination of the records and other evidence; though instead of concluding that his conduct was immoral they unite, according to M. Ollivier, in applauding his political genius. Almost the whole story of the connected machinations by which France was led step by step into war has since been disclosed, and the only part which is still unrevealed relates to the original devices by which Bismarck and Marshal Prim concerted the preliminaries to the offer of the Spanish throne to Leopold.*

It is cheerfully admitted by the German historians who are cited in this volume that the train of incidents which produced so well-timed an explosion was scientifically laid by the Prussian chancellor. But they maintain that he was only countermining

* Some light is thrown on these obscure intrigues by Lord Acton in the essay already cited. He writes that in 1869 Bismarck learned from Florence that Napoleon was preparing a triple alliance against him, and sent a Prussian officer, Bernhardi, to Madrid. 'What he did in Spain has been committed to oblivion. Seven volumes of his diary have been published; the family assures me (Acton) that the Spanish portion will never appear. . . . The Austrian First Secretary said that he betrayed his secret one day at dinner. Somebody spoke indiscreetly on the subject, and Bernhardi aimed a kick at him under the table, which caught the shin of the Austrian instead. He was considered to have mismanaged the thing, and it was whispered that he had gone too far—I infer that he offered a heavy bribe to secure a majority in the Cortes. Fifty thousand pounds of Prussian bonds were sent to Spain at midsummer, 1870. . . . I know the bankers through whose hands they passed.' Historical Essays, p. 214.

the underground combinations of the French, who were known to be organising a triple alliance with Italy and Austria for a combined assault upon Prussia; and that the journey of the Austrian Archduke Albert to Paris in March, 1870, convinced Bismarck that he had no time to lose, because war must be provoked before these alliances were consummated. And they cite the example of Frederick the Great, who disconcerted the secret preparations of his enemies by the sudden dash upon Dresden which opened the Seven Years' War. This defence of his own very skilful and not less astute manœuvres was endorsed by Bismarck in a speech before the Chamber in 1876; nor does it appear to us so untenable as M. Ollivier holds it to be. He argues that the fear of being attacked by France, if it had really influenced Bismarck's conduct in 1870, must have been a wild hallucination, for the chancellor must have been well aware that the emperor's policy at that time was decidedly pacific, and that his own (Ollivier's) views were still more so. He assures us that the project of a triple alliance was intended to be exclusively defensive, that it never passed beyond the 'academic' stage, or reached any practical form. The confidential negotiations of 1869 with Austria and Italy had been left, he says, in the stage of unfinished outline, nor was it even suspected either by the French or by the Italian ministry that they had been carried further. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that in 1869 these negotiations had been carried quite far enough to inspire the Prussian chancellor with serious disquietude, if, as is very probable, he had good information of them. We know, from M. Ollivier's very interesting account of what passed at the first meeting of the cabinet on July 6, when the ministers resolved to announce to the Chamber their determination to resent and resist the Hohenzollern candidature, that the emperor and M. de Gramont regarded the understanding with Italy and Austria as being much more than academic. It is there stated that when Ollivier hesitated to accept Gramont's assurance that the assistance of these two Powers, in the event of hostilities with Prussia, had been virtually secured, the Emperor Napoleon took from a drawer in his bureau certain letters written in 1869 by the Austrian emperor and the King of Italy, and, after reading them aloud, told the ministers that these writings undoubtedly amounted to promises of help in the circumstances that were then actually under discussion. The cabinet accepted these proofs that the alliances might be reckoned upon as substantial, so that it is not unreasonable to suppose that Bismarck had drawn the same conclusion from the intimations that had reached him,

and had set himself to provoke a war before the secret combinations against him should be ready for action. It must be borne in mind that from 1866 he had been deliberately preparing for it, being convinced, as he said later, that until France had been defeated in the field, his grand design of founding a German empire, with its capital at Berlin, could not be realised.

We may therefore be permitted to suggest that the discussion with which M. Ollivier closes this volume is to some extent superfluous, for it is incontestable that Bismarck had reasons for desiring the war, and that France was inveigled into declaring it. In the final section he returns to the question whether France or Prussia was responsible for the rupture; and after summing up the evidence he pronounces judgement against Prussia. It was Prussia that invented the Hohenzollern candidature, against which France was bound to protest forcibly; and even if it be admitted, he says, that the French cabinet was wrong in taking mortal offence at the insolent official version of the king's refusal to receive the French ambassador, there can be no doubt that this public affront infuriated the French nation, and drove it to the extremity of war. That the explosion was instantaneous he regards as a proof that it had not been expected nor premeditated by France. All these things are, indeed, neither denied nor deniable, for Bismarck's own arrogant revelations leave no doubt that the war had been desired and premeditated by that astute and far-seeing politician; and though upon the methods by which the Hohenzollern candidature was originally started Bismarck is judiciously silent, we may be morally certain that the instigation came from Berlin. The maxim *Fecit cui prodest* affords fair ground for this inference, particularly when we remember the obvious improbability that the Spanish ministry would have gratuitously set up a candidature which must infallibly have brought their country into collision with its formidable neighbour.

How the French government fell into a net that had been spread for them is to most of us sufficiently clear. Whether the emperor and his ministers ought to have detected and avoided it, is the real question, and it is practically the only question that concerns M. Ollivier. In the final pages of his book, which touch in dignified and pathetic words upon the injustice of the reproaches that have been heaped upon him and the rancorous calumnies by which he has been pursued, his readers are told that, having done his best to defend the cause of his nation, he will terminate his work without taking up his personal justification, though on one point he desires

not to be misunderstood. It has been pleaded on his behalf, he says, that he was in fact opposed to the declaration of war, but agreed to it under the violent pressure of public opinion, or else from reluctance to betray internal dissensions that would have broken up the ministry, or for other reasons. M. Ollivier insists, on the contrary, that after Bismarck's 'soufflet' he was convinced that peace could be maintained only at the price of his country's abject humiliation; and that he chose the alternative of war as infinitely preferable, without the least regard to his personal reputation or interests. We may willingly agree that M. Ollivier acted throughout from motives of high-minded patriotism, and although we cannot acquit him on the charge of grave imprudence we may freely admit that he was entangled in a situation of extraordinary difficulty. To Englishmen, who are familiar with the regular and recognised working of constitutional government, it will be plain that he was the victim of a system that had placed him before the public as the nominal head of a cabinet that he was supposed to have formed, and of a party in the Chamber that he was expected to lead. Whereas in fact he had no proper control over the policy of the cabinet, and no solid support in the Chamber. The emperor presided at the meetings of the cabinet; and it is clear that the ultimate decision in the supremely important departments of the army and of foreign affairs was still reserved to the sovereign, on whom the Foreign Secretary (as we should call him) could urge his views separately, and from whom he could take orders independently of the first minister. In this radically false position M. Ollivier found himself committed to measures on which he had not been consulted, and hurried into dangerous courses of action for which he had no recognised official responsibility, since they were sanctioned by the emperor's unquestionable authority. We have to remember, also, that in July, 1870, liberal institutions had been no more than six months under trial after eighteen years of autocratic rule, that the advocates of the old *régime* were numerous and openly hostile to the reforms, and that all the ministers of the new *régime* lacked experience in the art and practice of constitutional administration. It is among those conditions and circumstances that we must find some explanation of their imprudence, and of their inability to make a stand against the emperor's weakness, the clamour of hot-headed deputies, and the war-cries of journalists; some excuse, in short, for the heedlessness with which a well-meaning ministry stepped into the snare that had been laid for them.

When, in 1871, the ex-emperor was told of M. Ollivier's

earnest protest against the cruel injustice of holding him alone answerable for the national disasters, Napoleon is reported to have replied that this responsibility must be shared by the ministry, the Chamber, and himself.

'Si je n'avais pas voulu la guerre, j'aurais renvoyé mes ministres ; si l'opposition était venue d'eux, ils auraient donné leur démission ; enfin, si la Chambre avait été contraire à l'entreprise, elle eut voté contre.' *

In a broad and general sense this conclusion may be accepted, for all parties concerned were heavily to blame ; and manifestly the disasters were the outcome of a situation in which weakness and rashness were matched against unscrupulous statecraft and the deep-laid combinations of a consummate strategist.

* L'Empire Libéral, p. 475, footnote. Prince Napoleon told M. Ollivier that the emperor repeated this to him several times.

Art. XI.—THE LORDS' DEBATE ON THE FINANCE BILL, 1909.

(Reprinted from *The Times*. *Times* Office: 1909.)

For the first time in the history of England the House of Lords has debated a Budget. For the first time the Peers have rejected the whole of the supplies voted by the House of Commons, at the request of the Crown, for the service of the current year. In so doing, it is matter of dispute whether or not their action has been either justifiable or constitutional. But no one at all conversant with the working of the Constitution and with modern conditions can deny that the step taken by the Peers is entirely unprecedented, and is likely to bring about consequences of momentous importance. Whatever the result of the General Election now in progress may be, it will be impossible to go back to—to revive—the old state of things. The claim of the Peers must either be made good by the support of the electorate, in which case the relative importance of the two Houses of Parliament, not merely as regards finance, but as regards the control of the Government of the day, will be entirely changed; or, should the nation support the House of Commons, statutory provision must be made to prevent the Peers from acquiring a power which no one has hitherto supposed them to possess, and which the country will have declared they ought not to have.

The career of the Parliament elected four years ago has been a strange one in several respects. But nothing has been so strange as the manner in which that career has been brought to an end. In January 1906 a Liberal majority, unexampled in size and composed of very varied elements, was returned to the House of Commons to support a Prime Minister new to the responsibilities of that high office. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman deservedly enjoyed public respect. He had served his party truly, and no one supposed that that service was due to any self-seeking objects or personal ambitions of his own. But his long career in the House of Commons had not impressed his personality either on Parliament or the country. There was none of that ascendency which at one time gave Mr. Gladstone, at another time Lord Salisbury, a position of extraordinary authority outside party caucuses with immense masses of the generality of the people.

As to the cause of the late Prime Minister's triumph there could be no doubt. The previous Ministry had lost all credit, after it had lost for one cause or another almost all of those who had created the Unionist party, and to whom

since then the country had mainly given its confidence. A Unionist Cabinet to which neither Lord Salisbury, the Duke of Devonshire, Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Goschen, Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Lord James of Hereford, Lord George Hamilton, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, nor Mr. Ritchie belonged would naturally strike the imagination of the electors in a different light from its Unionist predecessors. They considered it a mere survival, and by no means a survival of the fittest. Four years ago, in every direction, Mr. Chamberlain was urging the cause of unadulterated Protection. In so doing he was winning some caucuses and causing the loss of many constituencies to the Unionist party. Mr. Balfour, it is true, still proclaimed himself in ever weakening tones a Free Trader ; but whenever pressed, and he was very often pressed, he invariably surrendered to Mr. Chamberlain, and gave the full official support of the Conservative party in every case to Tariff Reform or Protectionist candidates. Nevertheless, the General Election showed that the Unionist party was rent in twain ; and the country stood firm for Free Trade.

The majority was heterogeneous. The Labour party was a new factor in the House of Commons. Some members of that party were undoubtedly Socialists, whilst others were far less so than many ordinary Liberals. But before six months had elapsed it was clear to close observers that a spirit of Socialism of quite a novel kind pervaded the whole House to a greater extent than in any previous Parliament.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, at the end of 1905, in making up his Ministry had selected as his colleagues several statesmen whose previous careers had shown them to possess not merely Parliamentary ability, but an individuality and a firmness of character combined with a spirit of moderation which seemed to afford some guarantee that a prudent and common-sense policy would be pursued. No men in the country could have been found better fitted to conduct the departments to which they were severally appointed than Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, Lord Morley, and Mr. Haldane ; whilst the Prime Minister's bold step in introducing Mr. Burns into the Cabinet was a wise one, and has been entirely justified in the result. The Liberals had been long out of office. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had necessarily to rely largely on new men. It was not his fault, therefore, that he had to call into his counsels men of whom the country knew nothing, except that they were able and ambitious, skilful

* See article on ' Socialism in the House of Commons,' *Edinburgh Review*, October 1906

doubtless in parliamentary debate, but much more remarkable for the highly-coloured rhetoric and exaggerated invective in which they indulged on the platform—language such as the British people had been accustomed to hear from mob orators, but had not hitherto associated with Ministers of the Crown.

The electorate had entirely refused to take seriously the contention of Mr. Balfour and the Opposition that a Liberal victory at the polls would be fatal to the Empire. Four years' experience has now demonstrated the absurdity of the plea that the stability of the Empire is dependent on the predominance at home of the Conservative party. In its colonial policy, in its foreign policy, and in its Indian policy the affairs of the country have been wisely, prudently, and successfully, conducted on liberal principles, whilst in the great departments of the Navy and the Army there is no reason for thinking that national interests have been allowed to suffer anything by the fall of the late Government.

As the years have passed we have followed in these pages the work that has been accomplished and attempted in various directions, and we have no intention of recurring to it on this occasion. Whatever the reason may be, a Government which possesses so many capable administrators has shown itself in its collective capacity singularly unfortunate in its projects of home legislation. Many of its Bills have been unthought out and crude in the extreme, suggesting that its real object was to give satisfaction to the fussy and faddist elements in party caucuses rather than to accomplish practical beneficial work for the country. As for Ireland, the Ministry has appeared to forget that its first duty was to uphold the authority of the law. Not only was the duty not performed, but in appearance at least it was not even taken seriously. To these and other matters we have from time to time called attention. On the present occasion we do not intend to discuss either the successes or the failures of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's and Mr. Asquith's Government. They will probably not produce much effect one way or the other on the results of the General Election. It is sufficient to consider the extraordinary position in which the nation stands to-day.

It was easy to foresee that the result of the last General Election would give rise to difficulties and contention between the two Houses of Parliament. A party majority of Liberals, numbered by hundreds in the House of Commons, would, of course, take fundamentally different views of the legislation which the country requires, from the permanent party majority of Conservatives, also numbered by hundreds, which now dominates the House of Lords. In theory, but not in fact, the general authority of the two Houses of Parliament is equal. In practice,

Tory and Conservative statesmen have been much too wise and far-seeing to press to an extreme limit this theory of the equal authority of the House of Lords. They saw that it would never do to reject the great measures which from time to time Whig and Liberal Ministries passed through the House of Commons, simply because the Peers disapproved and disliked them. It has often needed much tact and forbearance on both sides to prevent a deadlock from which the only escape would have been through fundamental changes of the Constitution, which prudent statesmanship was anxious to avoid. Four years ago there was reason to hope that difficulties which were not found insurmountable when Liberals were led by Grey, Russell, and Gladstone, and Conservatives by Wellington, Peel, and Salisbury, would have been solved by that spirit of moderation and compromise which has usually characterised English politics, and to which far more than to the precise provisions of the Constitution the success of the British system has been due. Such great measures as Reform, the Abolition of the Corn Laws, the Disestablishment of the Irish Church, the recasting of the Irish Land System, and many more have been accepted by the House of Lords not because the majority of the Peers approved them on the merits; but because they were patriotic and wise enough to recognise that the House of Lords should in the interest of the country show some regard to great majorities of the representative chamber led by the Ministers of the Sovereign. When a measure recommended by the Crown and passed by the House of Commons, after long and arduous debates, at length reaches the House of Lords it is the duty of that House to take cognisance of the situation as a whole. Why, for instance, did the House of Lords in 1846 assent to the repeal of the Corn Laws? Would it have been right for them to dismiss all thought of the consequences, and to have rejected the establishment of Free Trade, desired by a majority of the House of Commons, merely because the great majority of their own House were convinced Protectionists? That was not Wellington's view. To reject the Corn Bill, he told the Peers, would be to place themselves in a position in which they would be 'entirely powerless. Without 'the House of Commons and the Crown the House of Lords 'can do nothing,' and he persuaded his noble friends, to the immense advantage of their country and themselves, to accept the decision of the Commons.

The severest trial to which the Constitution has been subjected from the rival claims of the two branches of the Legislature was naturally during the first and second Parliaments after the great Reform Bill. A new state of things had arisen, and it was

difficult for the Peers at first to recognise the change that had been created in their position by an Act of Parliament which touched the House of Commons alone. For some years many moderate men believed that our Parliamentary system could not work unless reforms of a fundamental character were made in the House of Lords. Roebuck, then an advanced Radical, the 'Tear'em' of the Forties and the Fifties, advocated the policy of allowing to the Lords only a 'suspensive veto.' In the pages of this Review the subject was repeatedly considered—an elective House of Lords, Life Peerages, the union of both Houses in 'free conference' to discuss and decide by a joint majority matters in dispute between them. Lords and Commons would gain, we thought in April 1835, by becoming better acquainted with each other. 'The bare circumstance of their sitting 'together in one chamber would greatly promote a cordial union 'of both ranks, in a country, above all, where from the equality 'of privileges and the habits of society, it so happens that the 'Houses of Parliament are the only places in which there is any 'estrangement between the aristocracy and the Commons.' The power of 'The Court' was at that time feared hardly less than that of the Peers, as likely to frustrate and check the policy desired by the House of Commons on behalf of the people. With the death of King William that fear vanished; and the long reign of Queen Victoria established for ever that between people and Sovereign in our constitutional system no political difference could arise.

What Queen Victoria did for the Throne was very largely accomplished for the House of Lords by the wisdom and prudence of Peel, on important occasions manfully supported by the patriotic and practical statesmanship of the Duke of Wellington. It is difficult to say what the results would have been had the dangerous counsels of Lord Lyndhurst met with Peel's approval. The latter, not the former, was in truth the real friend of the authority of the House of Lords. It is quite unnecessary to urge in 1910, as the *Edinburgh Review* urged in 1835, when popular liberties were new, and when many powerful interests still hankered after the power they had lost, that the people have become what Court and aristocracy once were, and that it is on the people alone that the Government and Ministries depend. This is now common ground to all parties; but what *is* the People, and what *does* the People really want, are questions it is sometimes difficult to answer. The House of Lords of to-day itself recognises that it cannot prevail against the popular will; but it claims to interpret that will, and it refuses to recognise even enormous majorities of the House of

Commons as its authorised exponents. Curiously enough, the Peers of to-day have taken their stand upon a principle of democracy a good deal more advanced than those upon which our institutions have been founded. The representative principle they hold cheap. They look for their 'mandate' directly to the people. It is a long step from Lord Lyndhurst to Lord Lansdowne, but we are by no means sure that there does not lurk under the specious gloss of the democratic phraseology of the day a greater danger to the representative principle, a more serious injury to the authority of the House of Commons than belonged seventy years ago to those bolder attacks of the Peers which were so wisely discountenanced by Peel.

The relations of the three branches of the Legislature *inter se* are not for the most part settled by statute. We have no written Constitution. When disputes between the two Houses of Parliament arise, their own resolutions, usage, precedents, the authority of our great statesmen, the dicta of our legal and constitutional writers, the existing conditions of the time, are all brought into consideration. In this way, without any express alteration of the law, the practical working of our old Constitution has been gradually and almost insensibly modified to suit existing conditions. And thus without statutory authority the relations of the two Houses towards each other and the importance of each in our Parliamentary system have become different from what they once were. It has not yet been found necessary for either House to protect itself by statute against the usurpation of the other. The Commons have not needed some 'Bill of Rights' to protect against the Lords their own exclusive authority to grant to the Crown the supplies for the year. The Lords have not needed to consider how to prevent the House of Commons from arrogating to itself, in despite of the Lords, complete legislative authority. Should fundamental changes of this kind be required in the relation of the Houses to each other, and of both of them to the State, they can only be made by Act of Parliament, in which, of course, each House must concur.

In the early days of the Parliament which is just dead Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman threatened, on the part of the House of Commons, an attack on the unquestioned and immemorial legislative authority of the House of Lords. Much was to be said, in our opinion, for reforming the constitution of the Upper House; almost nothing for so weakening that chamber, as in fact to make of the House of Commons alone a sovereign Parliament. The announcement of the Prime Minister's policy, and the subsequent carrying of a resolution in the House of Commons

in its favour, fell very flat in the country. The House of Lords took no notice of what was done in the Commons ; and proceeded to stop the passage of measure after measure recommended to it by the Ministers of the Crown, and supported by majorities almost without precedent in the representative House. As far as can be judged, though party organs and party caucuses fumed with indignation, the country took it all very calmly. Nevertheless, perhaps the Lords would have been wiser to have been less high-handed, and to have listened on more than one occasion to the counsels of those amongst them who looked beyond the immediate electioneering interests of the Conservative party. It is by way of compromise that the weight of moderate men in both parties has often made itself usefully felt, and given check to the extravagances of caucus politicians. It is unfortunate, and it is not of good augury for the future, that party leaders have of late shown little disposition to extricate the country from difficulty by the exercise of a little reasonable give and take, formerly a marked characteristic of English statesmen.

The Lords, unfortunately, not content with the vigorous exercise of a legislative authority which undoubtedly belonged to them, and believing, rightly or wrongly, that their action was approved by the people, in the last days of the Parliament, took the startling step of rejecting, for this in fact it was, the whole of the supplies granted to the King for the year 1909–10. The Budget had passed the House of Commons by immense majorities. It had been discussed at great length, and many important changes had been made in it, for the most part very favourable to the views of the Opposition. The Government had rightly declined to be driven into taking arbitrary measures for shortening debate, and thus the summer and autumn were consumed in one of the most arduous Sessions the House of Commons has ever known.

This much-debated and much-amended measure at last passed the House of Commons by a majority almost without example ; and on November 22 the Budget in its final form stood for second reading in the House of Lords, where it was at once met by Lord Lansdowne with the amendment : 'That this House is not 'justified in giving its consent to this Bill until it has been 'submitted to the judgement of the country.' After five nights' debate the amendment to the motion for the second reading was carried on November 30 by a majority of 275.

This, of course, left to Mr. Asquith but two alternatives—resignation or immediate dissolution. The Prime Minister could not parley with the Lords as to making modifications in the Bill, for this would have been at once to give away his case—the

absolutely uncontrolled supremacy of the Commons over the granting of supplies to the Crown—hitherto an accepted principle of the Constitution. Besides, if the forcing of a dissolution was the real object of the Conservative amendment, there was no room for compromise. The Government and Budget were believed to be unpopular, as a Government and Budget imposing a large increase of taxation are always likely to be; 'property' was alarmed, the landed interest hostile, the liquor interest furious, and many of the electors had been captivated by the foolish Protectionist fallacy that 'taxing foreigners' would diminish the burden on their own shoulders and provide abundant work for the unemployed. In the opinion of the party managers the hour had arrived. No Unionist statesman had, it is true, in public advised the Peers to reject the Budget till after Lord Lansdowne had given notice of his amendment—with the exception of Mr. Chamberlain. That very many disapproved his action was shown by the number of Peers who, when the division came, declined to follow their leader into the Lobby. The party managers and the extremists in the Press prevailed. In 1909 there was no Peel to counsel prudence and hold the more reckless and irresponsible spirits in check. A dissolution had been decreed and a dissolution there should be.

There was, perhaps, something to be said in favour of the Prime Minister's choosing the other alternative—viz., resignation. A Ministry to whom Parliament refuses the supplies to carry on the King's Government cannot govern. It can live only for a few short weeks on its prospects in the hope that a new Parliament will support it. At first sight it would seem to be a strange proceeding for the Sovereign to dissolve a House of Commons which enthusiastically supports Ministers of the Crown in a financial policy hitherto supposed to be exclusively under House of Commons' control, solely because the House of Lords disapproves it. Logically, of course, had the Constitution rendered it possible, the right course would have been to dissolve the House of Lords. Supposing, that is, that the power to dissolve is a royal prerogative to be exercised like other royal prerogatives on the advice of Ministers of the Crown. But since this was impossible, is it altogether wise to admit that the House of Lords on the second reading of a Budget Bill—an annual necessity—has it in its power to decree a dissolution? Even granting Lord Curzon's plea that the Peers are very superior people indeed. the notion that the House of Lords should be able to dissolve the House of Commons involves too novel a rendering of our Constitutional system for the Commons of England unhesitatingly to accept it.

We doubt whether people in general have yet recognised fully what the exercise by the House of Lords of the power to reject the supplies of the year really means. Had the Government resigned, everyone would have seen the simple truth—that the power of the purse involves of necessity the power to determine by whom the country is to be governed. When so few of the Peers themselves, judging by their speeches in the House of Lords and on the platform, seem to realise that their action completely 'upsets the balance of the Constitution,' to quote the words of Mr. Henry Hobhouse,* it is hardly matter of surprise that many of the electorate do not at once perceive its importance. Experience will teach them; and it is to be hoped they will learn their lesson before disastrous deadlock has occurred. If the only object were to get the constitutional point settled, it would be impossible not to regret that the Prime Minister did not resign on the morning after the decision of the House of Lords. Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Balfour, in advising the stoppage of the supplies, were bound to undertake the responsibility of carrying on the King's Government, which they had made impossible to the Ministers trusted by the House of Commons. The new Ministers would then have had to find the money, and would, of course, have appealed at once to the people to support them in their financial policy. A Budget is a disagreeable necessity. The country dislikes to be taxed; hence it is a popular thing to denounce taxes on liquor, and on income, and on capital, and on land, without presenting specific alternatives. The process of forcing a dissolution by the rejection of a Budget will be a method freely resorted to in future by the House of Lords when a Liberal Ministry is in power and there seems to be a fair chance of the Conservative party making a substantial gain at a General Election. It must be remembered that the majority of that House always hold, in perfect good faith, that the continuance in office of a Liberal Ministry is fraught with very great danger to the country and empire. And they will think it therefore their duty to afford to the electors an opportunity of weakening or overthrowing it.

It is said that electors in the present day take no interest in constitutional questions in dispute between the two Houses—in 'the privileges' of the House of Commons and 'the privileges' of the House of Lords—in the fundamental distinction that exists between ordinary legislation and taxation. As to this

* Letter of the Rt. Hon. Henry Hobhouse to the *Spectator*, December 4, 1909.

last, indeed, many of the Peers themselves in the recent debate appeared to be entirely forgetful, or totally regardless, of the constitutional history of their country. When the electors know what the claim of the Lords to be partner with the Commons in the business of taxation really means for them they will make very short work of the claim. The question in truth is, 'Who are to tax the people?' Are they to tax themselves by the instrumentality of their representatives, elected for the purpose for a limited period, or are the taxes to be framed so as to meet the approval of such a body as the House of Lords, permanent in its composition and over which the people themselves have no control whatever?

What did Lord Chatham say? 'The taxes are a voluntary 'gift or grant of the Commons alone. In legislation the three 'estates of the realm are alike concerned; but the concurrence 'of the Peers and the Crown to a tax is only necessary to close 'with the form of a law. The gift and grant is of the Commons 'alone. . . . The distinction between legislation and taxation 'is essentially necessary to liberty. The Crown, the Peers, are 'equally legislative powers with the Commons. If taxation 'be a part of simple legislation, the Crown, the Peers, have 'rights in taxation as well as yourselves: rights which they 'will claim, which they will exercise, whenever the principle 'can be supported by power.' *

We are not surprised that Lord James of Hereford, bred, as he says, in Whig traditions, and distinguished throughout a long life by his ability to stand above the mere party advocacy of the moment, to regard fundamentals in political controversy with the eye of a statesman not less than of a constitutional lawyer, should stand aghast at the recklessness of the policy pursued by the House of Lords. The five days' debate in that assembly was an interesting one. There was some really good speaking of a high order. Constitutional points were well argued. The different standpoints and temperaments and sympathies of individual speakers were well marked. As a display to delight an audience it was everything that could be desired. At the same time, it is not easy to conceive how a better example could be given of the unfitness of that assembly to control taxation. In a great debate on the taxes the ordinary taxpayer was literally nowhere. Some of the great interests were abundantly represented—the land, the liquor interest, the City, capital generally. It is most important, for the sake of the poor as well as of the rich, that capital should have its advocates and

* See Chatham Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 366, note.

its defenders. Capital and industry depend upon each other. But after all, in a debate on taxes in a great industrial country like ours, there are other interests that require consideration. In the House of Commons all classes are represented, and the worker's and the poor man's point of view is urged. In this respect our House of Commons compares very favourably both with the House of Lords and the American Senate. In the recent discussion by the latter of Tariff questions, whilst different interests struggled fiercely with each other, no one thought of the general public!

Some have strangely argued that the Peers are not claiming the right to tax, because Peers have no right to 'initiate taxation.' For the matter of that, no member of the House of Commons can 'initiate taxation.' Taxes can only be raised in response to the request of the King made to the House of Commons, not, be it remembered, to the House of Lords. If the present claim of the House of Lords is made good, they virtually will have the power to tax. In the present instance the Peers do not declare that they will not allow supplies to the extent of some 160 millions to be raised, but only that they will not allow them to be raised in the manner desired by the Commons who grant them. They would allow them if the deficit of some sixteen millions, instead of being raised out of land, and death duties, and super-taxes, and liquor licences, and so on, were to be raised by means of Custom duties, including the Tariff Reformer's plan of taxing the bread and butter and meat imported for the general consumption of the people. The broad question between direct and indirect taxation will generally be differently regarded by the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Is a Liberal House of Commons which favours direct taxation to be dissolved at the behest of the House of Lords in the chance that a General Election may return a Conservative majority? If in the past the wishes of the House of Lords had settled the matter we should never have had free corn—that is, untaxed bread—in this country. Fortunately, the wisdom and patriotism of the Peers in the middle of last century, and their respect for the Constitution, saved the country from a fatal conflict.

Somewhat strangely, it has come about that whilst at the beginning of the last Parliament all the indications pointed to a vigorous attack by the Prime Minister and the majority of the House of Commons upon the authority of the House of Lords as a branch of the Legislature, we have at the end of the Parliament to some extent a reversal of that position. In standing on their unquestioned rights under the Constitution, and in resisting the policy of establishing for legislative purposes

what would virtually be a single-chamber Parliament, the defensive attitude of the Lords appeared to have behind it popular support. They are now attacking what usage and custom have given to the House of Commons—the complete control of National Finance—the power of fixing the amount and the method of raising the revenue of the year in response to the annual request from the Crown. Everyone admits that under the Constitution the House of Lords by a vote on the Second Reading of the Finance Bill has the legal power to stop the supplies—that is, its action in so doing cannot be complained of or questioned in any court of law. No Bill, whether a taxing Bill or otherwise, that has passed the House of Commons, even with unanimity, can have the slightest validity as law unless it has been assented to by the House of Lords and the Sovereign. It is not less beyond dispute that this power of stopping the supplies has never been exercised in the past, and that the language of statesmen, whether Whig or Tory, Liberal or Conservative, and unbroken usage, have alike treated the House of Commons in the department of National Finance as supreme.

The case of the House of Lords in disregarding authority and usage is rested by the more sagacious and statesmanlike of the peers upon the subversive and revolutionary character which they attribute to the Budget, and its alleged infringement of the rule against 'tacking.' We certainly should hesitate to lay down that under no circumstances would it be justifiable for the Lords to reject the supplies for the year. It is an exceptional proceeding, and exceptional proceedings have sometimes been required. It may, for instance, conceivably be justifiable for a three-year or a seven-year Parliament to extend its term, or for a Sovereign by a creation of hundreds of peers to 'swamp' an impracticable majority of the House of Lords. Still, we should expect that the peers of all people would be most inclined to deprecate, except in the extremity of pending revolution, the violent disregard of the usages of the Constitution.

Let us consider first the technical plea for rejection—viz. 'tacking.' The House of Lords themselves, more than two centuries ago, passed their standing order which declares that

> 'the amending of any clause or clauses to a Bill of aid or supply the matter of which is foreign to and different from the matter of the said Bill of aid or supply is un-Parliamentary, and tends to the destruction of the constitution of this Government.'

This claim of the Lords is entirely reasonable. It admits, as a matter of course, the predominant authority of the Commons over finance; but it refuses to allow matter of

legislation entirely distinct from the grant of supply to be mixed up with it so as to escape, like the money grant itself, the ordinary legislative authority of the Lords. Statesmen of all parties have recognised the wisdom of this provision. It is now urged that the proposed Liquor Licence Clauses, which increase existing taxes, are inadmissible in the Finance Bill because in the previous year a Licensing Bill which imposed increased duties was rejected by the House of Lords. The argument seems to have nothing whatever to do with 'tacking,' but to rest on the notion that because one year Parliament rejected a Bill containing clauses increasing licence duties, the House of Commons had no authority, the following year, when perhaps the necessities of the revenue might be much greater, to vary or increase them. There is no foundation whatever for such a contention, and there are many reasons of a constitutional and practical nature against it.

The contention that the land valuation clauses are no part of a Finance Bill is perhaps more arguable. Still, supposing it is competent to a House of Commons to impose taxes of a novel kind on land, as on other forms of property, land valuation would appear not to be matter 'foreign to or different from' land taxation, but to be a necessary and indispensable preliminary to a just imposing of the taxes authorised. Lord Halsbury was wise not to rest his opposition on any technical pleas of this kind. The House of Lords had, he maintained, a right to reject any and every Bill, money Bill or otherwise. He did not attempt to define 'tacking.' The only way to maintain the authority of the Lords was, he said, to assert their rights over all Bills, otherwise there was no knowing what strange policy might not find itself incorporated in a money Bill. The Bill was a bad Bill, and as the Lords had a right to reject it they ought to do so. There is certainly an attractive simplicity about this advice. We have evidently travelled far from the statesmanship of Sir Robert Peel! Had the Lords rejected summarily great measures solely because they disapproved them and thought them dangerous, where would the Constitution have been to-day?

Now we come to the real question on which the action of the House of Lords will be ultimately judged. That that action is exceptional, is indeed without precedent, must be granted. But sometimes, as we have said, unprecedented action is called for in the interest of the State. Would the acceptance of the Budget, as it left the Commons, after many months' debate, have produced a 'revolution'—a general upturn of English social life, have inverted classes, have weakened the authority

of law, have disturbed public order, have shaken down any of our national institutions? Some persons, especially amongst the many who had never read the Finance Bill, thought it was undoubtedly a step in that very undesirable direction. Now the Budget was, as we think, in many respects a bad one. We have pointed out our objections to it on previous occasions in these pages, and we do not intend to rediscuss it. Its greatest fault in our eyes is the feeling that it necessarily created of unfair and unjust treatment—that its motive was not so much the raising of revenue as the accomplishment of objects partly 'socialistic' and partly vindictive. This impression was produced by the extraordinarily foolish, and worse than foolish, language indulged in by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and one or two other members of the Ministry. The general public read the speeches and the glosses put upon them by a press which revels in extravagance and exaggeration, and something like a panic was created amongst the more nervous of those who had much to lose.

Yet there were several considerations of a calming character which apparently were lost sight of. The Budget was, of course, intended to regulate the finance of the year 1909–10. It could hardly have become law before the middle of December, and after April 1, 1910, national finance will be regulated by a new Budget—that for the year 1910–11—to be prepared, as usual, on the basis of the new estimates. The step taken towards anarchy by last year's luckless Budget was neither a very long one, nor for any length of time irretrievable. The Archbishop of York, in a very remarkable first speech which made a considerable impression on those who heard him, described the state of mind of no small portion of the public when he declared that to him the Budget appeared to be a bad one, but not sufficiently bad to justify so unprecedented a proceeding on the part of the House of Lords as was advised by Lord Lansdowne.

Of all the speeches that of Lord Balfour of Burleigh was the most telling from the point of view of those who, whilst severely criticising the Budget, yet considered the action of the House of Lords in rejecting it as impolitic as it was unconstitutional. He dealt with the statement that the House of Lords were not rejecting the Budget, but were merely asking for the direct approval or disapproval of the electorate.

'If you are to establish a system whereby this House or any other authority had the right of establishing a referendum, as it is called—a reference to the people in matters of finance—you would spoil and destroy the control of the other House of Parliament over the

Government, and you would make, I venture to say, perhaps the most momentous change in the Constitution, as it has grown up which has been made in the whole history of our Constitution . . . If you pass this resolution, with whatever safeguards—whether you say it is to be done only on extreme occasions, I care not—you have made a change in the practice and in the Constitution which will prevent things going on as they have gone on up to the present time. My Lords, if you win, the victory can at most be a temporary one.'

And he goes on to comment on certain unhealthy growths in our modern political system—the power of the caucus, the 'pernicious doctrine of the mandate,' which were sapping the strength of the House of Commons and its respect in the eyes of the people.

'Never, then, was there a time in the history of this country when a second chamber, strong, trusted, and, as it must be in the nature of the case, somewhat conservative, was more necessary than it is at present. I turn, then, to my own friends' (the Conservative Party) 'and ask, "Are you wise at this stage, in these circumstances, to make a new claim—for it is a new claim you are making in the resolution which is before the House to-night?" . . . You have to some extent been put in a false position. You have been urged to take this course by those in the public Press and elsewhere who, in my opinion, are not the wisest friends of this House; and it is from an honourable feeling that you cannot betray those interests which I have mentioned that you are going to vote for the resolution. . . . There never was a time,' Lord Balfour continued, 'when it was more necessary to make a great effort to combine all those who are described as moderate men. Your action to-night will make that course difficult. You are going, if I may humbly say so to you, to offend the deeper conservative instincts of the country, and that feeling may be reflected at the poll.'

He knew it was from no selfish motive that they would act, but rather from an honourable feeling that they would be betraying others to 'save their own skins' if they acted otherwise.

'I understand, I even honour, your action. I would like to join you if I could; but my judgement is that it is a false step, alike in the interests of the country and of the House in which I have spent the whole of my political life.'

Perhaps in former days, so weighty an appeal from a distinguished Conservative peer would have induced peers of his own side of politics to pause before breaking through the constitutional usages of generations. The majority on the present occasion justify their action; and peers since then in innumerable speeches from Conservative platforms have denounced the

Budget and Free Trade together; and evidently think that it belongs to the House of Lords to take under its benevolent charge the taxation of the people. 'You,' Sir Edward Grey has said to his opponents, 'are the revolutionaries'; and the charge is not without foundation. It is, however, only fair to admit that many of the 'revolutionary peers' see clearly that the financial power they claim will never be entrusted to an assembly constituted in the manner of the House of Lords, and they accordingly declare themselves willing to give up, at all events to a great extent, the hereditary principle upon which that House at present rests. The immediate effect of the carrying of Lord Lansdowne's amendment has been to show the necessity for overhauling our parliamentary system. And Conservative peers are themselves apparently in favour of substantially changing both the composition and functions of the House of Lords.

The speech of Lord Curzon delighted the peers. It was an able and rhetorical vindication of the real position that the House of Lords was taking up. Lord Curzon cared little for Constitutionalism. For the late House of Commons, indeed for the House of Commons as an institution, he showed no respect at all. It was the high privilege and first duty of the House of Lords to defend 'The People' against their own representatives—representatives who, it must be remembered, would have in any case very shortly to present themselves to the 'people' for a renewal or withdrawal of their confidence. It was an oration very different in tone and spirit from the cautious speech of Lord Lansdowne. It breathed the feeling which impelled the peers to force a dissolution, under the unhappy guidance of those influences referred to by Lord Balfour. Lord Rosebery at Glasgow had spoken in language it was impossible to misunderstand of the impolicy of using the House of Lords as the instrument for the destruction of a bad Budget. In the House of Lords he naturally refused to take any responsibility for the reckless action pressed upon them, as he—the fiercest of all the critics of the Budget—considered it. But Lord Curzon would brook no delay. 'The consequence' of letting the Budget pass 'would not be confined to the sphere 'of taxation. They would extend over the whole range of 'government. It would have been two more years, as we think, 'of insufficient attention to the defences of the country, two more 'years of Socialistic experiments, two more years of tampering 'with the Church and some other of our national institutions.' In plain English the real object of the Conservative majority of the House of Lords was to turn out of office the Ministers of the King, though supported by an overwhelming majority of the House of Commons. This is what is called 'defending The 'People from the House of Commons.' If the Conservative

party had a majority in the Commons of say 30 instead of 300, who would defend the unfortunate 'people'?

The rejection of the Budget is intended to secure the double object of getting rid of a Conservative Ministry, and of the Free Trade system on which for so many years the commercial and financial system of the country has been based. It is hoped to reverse the modern tendency towards direct rather than indirect taxation. There is no antagonism between Free Trade and revenue duties on imports. The latter have always formed a considerable part of every Free Trade Budget. They are objectionable, as are all taxes in themselves, whether direct or indirect. Taxing imports to make people richer, to transfer taxation to 'the foreigner,' to abolish unemployment, is sheer folly and Free Traders ask for some reasons founded on the experience of ourselves and other nations; for some arguments that have not been refuted over and over again in the last sixty years, and which were not literally crumpled up by Mr. Chamberlain himself after he had had years of experience as President of the Board of Trade. Lord Milner thought it would be quite easy to raise 13,000,000*l.* out of import duties; the suggestion being, we suppose, to diminish the direct taxation imposed by the Budget by that amount. Lord Lansdowne reminded the House of Lords that 'people are asking whether, after all, 'cheapness is everything.' Lord Lansdowne and Lord Milner are entitled to be heard with respect on all subjects. Some day they may exercise great weight in determining the financial system of the country. Neither has ever sat in the House of Commons, and we wish they could discuss these things in a freer and more bracing atmosphere than that of the House of Lords. Cheapness is not everything. Still, the cheapness for instance of good wheat bread is but another name for its plentifulness. Its plentifulness is due to the fact that the whole world is the farm on whose produce the nation relies, and that the progress of modern civilisation, science, and skill enables it to reach our doors. Free Trade allows it to enter those doors untaxed. The cheapness of corn is one great asset of our national prosperity. Import duties are asked for by a great portion of the agricultural interest in order that the price of corn may be increased. Tariff Reformers say that their system of taxation will make us rich, and therefore we shall not mind a rise in prices! We have had ample experience in the past that Protection did not make us richer, but did make us very much poorer.

The Peers have made the rejection of the Budget part of the Protectionist campaign. The cry of Free Trade and the House of Commons against Protection and the House of Lords would in old days have rallied Whigs and Liberals to the fight. This

is the first great issue before the electorate; though the Prime Minister has lately declared, if not explicitly for Home Rule, at least for some unexplained system of 'full self-government' for purely Irish affairs, the supreme and indefeasible authority of the Imperial Parliament being preserved.'

Home Rule will never be carried by using vague phrases. All the real difficulties—impossibilities—that prevent the surrender to Irish Nationalism remain. This, however, is no Home Rule election. The 'predominant partner' remains unconverted, and the promised abolition of the House of Lords before Home Rule is achieved hardly seems to bring the latter policy nearer.

Yet though Free Trade versus Protection is the principal issue before the electors, constitutional questions of great importance will be raised in the new Parliament. The country, we believe, is in favour of an efficient Second Chamber, whilst it is determined that the existing House of Lords shall not control National Finance. It is natural, having regard to the recent action of the Peers, that at Liberal meetings the cry of 'Sweep them away!' should be received with cheers. That is not the wish of the staid element in the Liberal Party. Possibly a practical reform of the House of Lords, founded upon some principle in accord with modern sentiment, may receive a support from moderate men on both sides of politics which will surprise the extremists—those, on the one side, who would sweep it away, or reduce it to the useless function of saying 'ditto' to the House of Commons, and those, on the other side, who would give it control over National Finance—that is, render it supreme over the Government of the day.

Reform of the House of Lords, long the subject of abstract discussion, will soon enter on the practical stage. Elsewhere we discuss the merits of the 'Referendum.' It would be unwise summarily to dismiss all recourse to some system of the kind. Evidently, however, it rests on a principle directly the opposite of that popular *representation* to which the success of our Parliamentary system is due. The policy of *Plébiscite* or *Referendum* means the abandonment in despair of the principle of representative government. Far better reform our Parliamentary institutions by extending and improving their representative character; maintaining the old lines, and our two-Chamber system. Reformers of the House of Lords might recall the last words of Lord Grey in 1832, after the so-called 'revolutionizing' of the House of Commons. The reforms may be far-reaching, but let them be, in the true sense of the words, 'conservative of the 'Constitution.'

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THE

EDINBURGH REVIEW,

APRIL, 1910.*

No. CCCCXXXII.

Art. I.—ENGLISH WATERWAYS.

1. *Minutes of Evidence and other matter published by the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the Canals and Inland Navigations of the United Kingdom.* 7 vols., including
2. *Report on the Waterways of Belgium, France, Germany, and Holland.* By W. H. Lindley, M.Inst.C.E., Assist. Commissioner. Vol. vi.
3. *Fourth and Final Report on the Waterways of England, Wales, and Scotland.* Vol. vii.
4. *Bradshaw's Canals and Navigable Waterways of England and Wales.* London: Blacklock and Co. 1904.
5. *Transports et Tarifs.* By C. Colson. Paris: Lucien Laveur. 1908.

[And other Works.]

The Royal Commission on Canals and Waterways came into existence almost contemporaneously with the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's Ministry, and although it outlives the Parliament of 1906, it has already, in completing its Report on British waterways, accomplished by far the most important part of its labours. It is hardly to be anticipated that any recommendations it may think fit to make with regard to Ireland will raise very serious discussion. As this Commission has adopted the excellent plan of publishing its evidence as it has progressed, those who take any deep interest in the subject have been able to study the developments of the question as

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they have presented themselves to the Commissioners, or at any rate can check their conclusions by reference to the data on which they rest.

This Commission owed its origin not so much to a spontaneous conception on the part of the Government as to steady pressure applied to the Board of Trade for at least ten years. Complaints as to excessive rates imposed by our railways have been general among British traders, who contrast them with the much lower rates which exist abroad. It is also alleged that the foreign importer here enjoys preferential rates for his imported goods over the British trader. This is a policy which can no doubt be defended by our railway administrators, who have to earn dividends under difficulties; but it is not surprising that the trader complains. But though the railways, on the other hand, allege that the services they render are far more considerable than those offered by continental lines, the trading community has not unnaturally been looking for a revival of British canals as one means of supplying the competition which hardly exists to-day under the arrangements which are becoming more and more the fashion between rival lines. Often, it is true, these are the result of necessity; but our waterways in their existing condition offer no real opportunity for competition, and canal rates are on the average only a little lower than railway rates.* More than one Bill has in recent years been brought into the House of Commons, backed by private members of both parties, proposing that certain main waterways should be acquired by a Central Canals Board; and the Associated Chambers of Commerce carried unanimously a resolution to much the same effect in 1905. Therefore it is clear that the action of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and his colleagues was due to the recognition of a genuine demand that the question should be seriously dealt with. The composition of the Commission was such as to insure the adequate consideration of the matter from every point of view, and the railway interest was strongly represented upon it. In the collection of evidence no pains have been spared. Many may think that some of it might have been dispensed with; but, so long as Royal Commissions are carried on in their present manner, it is generally a sound working principle to listen to a certain amount of irrelevance rather than to arouse resentment because some interest or locality considers that its case has not been fairly heard.

In the South of England it is safe to say that the canal question has for long been a dead issue. The artificial waterways there

* Cf. Report, paragraph 457.

which are still capable of carrying traffic neither have nor could have any serious claim to consideration. It may be a moot point whether the Thames should be treated from the commercial rather than the recreative standpoint; but it is certain that any serious attempt to convert it from a stream of pleasure into a commercial highway would meet with strenuous and bitter resistance from more than one class of our population.

The problem, therefore, which this Commission had to solve only in fact arises when we approach the Midlands, and while the West and North are almost equally concerned in it, the Eastern counties are hardly touched. There, as is so often the case in Holland, artificial waterways are primarily drainage works, and if they ever become the subjects of legislation it could only be after the problem in the Midlands and the North of England had been dealt with.

One of the greatest advantages of this country as a manufacturing centre is to be found in the fact that few of our staple industries are carried on at any great distance from the sea. The consequence is that the cost of sea-carriage is the vital factor in regulating the cost of all carriage of goods. But, while the country as a whole undoubtedly benefits by proximity to the sea, yet those districts from which it is least accessible suffer out of all proportion. Of these the region of which Birmingham is the centre is the most important example. As it also lies at an elevation of over 400 feet, the construction of canals becomes more costly, owing to the necessity of either multiplying locks, or else of employing lifts or inclines. According to evidence given before the Commission, the manufacturers of Birmingham enjoy but few of the advantages of competition from the proximity of three railroads, as arrangements between these companies exist which prevent the locality benefiting from the rivalry which otherwise would come into play. It is not surprising, therefore, that a good deal of the impetus towards the revival of waterways should have emanated from that district, where complaints as to railway rates are particularly acute, and from the recommendations made by the Commissioners it is clear that Birmingham is accepted as the centre whence the improved waterways are to radiate or towards which they are to lead.

But it would not be fair to argue that the Commission fixed their attention from the beginning wholly or even principally on the wants of the Midlands. They have surveyed impartially the history and condition of all British waterways, wherever situated, so long as they could legitimately be held to contribute to the commercial advantage of the country. It is true that Mr. Inglis, the general manager of the Great Western Railway,

in his able dissentient Report finds fault with some of their conclusions on the history of our canals; but we cannot see that any important exception can be taken to their views on this point.

The great era of canal construction in Great Britain extended from 1761 to 1820. In fact, the main portion of our canals was already in existence by the close of the eighteenth century. The third Duke of Bridgewater was the pioneer, and after the opening of the Bridgewater Canal in July 1761, the work proceeded with great rapidity and success all over the country. This involved a complete revolution in the method of transport existing at that time, for by the close of the century the country was much better provided with canals than it had been with roads at the beginning. The result was that, as the industrial capacity of Great Britain was increasing rapidly, the canal shareholders made great fortunes and the shares were quoted at fabulous prices. But these halcyon days were all too short, for the railway era opened almost contemporaneously with the close of that of canal construction, and the decadence of canals as a means of transport followed rapidly, and the chief difficulty from the economic point of view which the Commission has had to face soon declared itself.

There are at present 4053 miles of waterway in England and Wales. This total is made up as follows:

	Miles.	Chains.
Canals	1927	34
Navigations	1312	77
Estuaries	812	67
	4053	18

These are owned as follows:

Independently owned	2869	42
Railway owned	965	17
Railway controlled	218	39
	4053	18

The railway owned and controlled therefore amount to 1183 miles, being a third of the total length of canals and navigations, and more than a fourth of the whole length, including estuaries.

It was a view commonly held before the issue of this Report that it was the deliberate policy of the railway companies, entered on from the first and ruthlessly pursued afterwards, to

buy up canals in order to strangle their competition. This is exploded by the Commissioners.

* 'The owners of waterways,' they say, 'were evidently greatly depressed by the advent of these rivals, especially as the trading community in every part of the country were anxious to obtain the new means of transport as quickly as possible. Under these circumstances the canal directors did what they could to save the interests of their shareholders. Some of them obtained Acts of Parliament to make sections of railway and in some cases actually built them. Armed with these powers, they were in a position of advantage in negotiations with the railway companies, and frequently sold themselves on terms which have, as it subsequently proved, involved the railway companies in considerable loss. In other cases they failed to obtain these powers or waited too long before trying to obtain them, and after losing much of their traffic to the railways, parted with their undertakings at a loss. In the majority of cases the canal companies remained independent.'

Mr. Inglis, one of the Commissioners and the well-known general manager of the Great Western Railway, in a dissentient report points out that the opposition of the canal companies to the advent of the railways was a good deal more vigorous than the Majority Report allows. For instance, no less than 70,000*l.* was spent by them in opposing the Manchester and Liverpool Railway scheme in Parliament.

'In some cases,' says Mr. Inglis, 'such pressure was brought to bear on the railway companies that they were compelled to take over certain canals as a condition of getting authority to construct their proposed lines. In other cases the canal companies obtained parliamentary powers for building railways with the express design of compelling the railway companies to buy them out. In still other cases, the railways deemed it prudent to purchase, to take over, or to guarantee the interest of canal companies without being actually forced to do so. But, whatever the precise reasons, the canals were not, in the great majority of instances, voluntarily acquired by the railway companies.'

The result of this is, as Mr. Inglis states in a subsequent paragraph, that the railways were forced to acquire canals in which even their owners had no faith as a competitive means of carriage and that these canals remain to-day as a burden on the railways, being maintained not because anyone wants them, but because there is a legal obligation to keep them up imposed on corporations which are wealthy enough to be able to do it. In

* Report, page 11.

some cases it is not surprising to find that these obligations are discharged without much zeal, but in others it was confessed by witnesses that the railways performed their duties admirably. While we may accept Mr. Inglis's rendering of the situation as it was in the middle of the nineteenth century as correct, it will be seen that he supplements rather than differs from the statement of the Majority.

But such discussions are after all somewhat academic. Far more important are the other aspects of the question which the Commission was appointed to consider—viz. the present condition of our waterways, why they have not been improved by private enterprise, whether such improvement is desirable at the public expense, if the benefit arising would be compatible with the cost incurred, and whether it be desirable that the waterways now in private hands should be acquired and administered by public authorities.

The question of the present condition of our waterways is hardly a matter of acute controversy. Anyone who has perused the evidence offered before the Commission (and the number of those who have spent their time in this manner is probably not large) will have come to the conclusion that he rarely embarked on a more melancholy task. With some brilliant exceptions, the story is throughout one of mourning, desolation and woe. The traders complain that the canals of the country are in a condition of decay and are quite inadequate to perform the functions which they might still discharge were they properly maintained and adequately improved. This complaint is in many cases supported by those responsible for the canals, who allege, and usually with substantial foundation, that they possess neither the means now nor the hope of gain hereafter which would lead them to incur greater expenditure than is absolutely necessary in order to run their property as a going concern. In the cases where a fair dividend is still paid it will be found that the profit made is often not derived from the carriage of goods on the waterway but from extraneous sources of income, such as rents, sale of timber growing on the banks, and the proceeds of similar properties of which the owners may be possessed. In the case of rivers there is of course no question of making money in order to pay dividends, but it will be found that the systems of control are generally antiquated and confused and little calculated to turn them to the best use. While the Thames, the Severn and the Trent are on the whole well maintained, some of the minor streams, especially in the Eastern counties, are in the hands of so many different authorities that the possibility of evolving any sort of order from such chaos, except by

sweeping away the existing state of things altogether, is not even to be imagined.

The difficulty arising from this multiplicity of authorities is, of course, very serious when goods have to be sent a considerable distance by water. This is well described on p. 16 of the Report:

'Taking Birmingham as a centre we will assume that it is proposed to dispatch thence three cargo boats, one to the Port of London, one to that of Liverpool, and one to Hull, by the most direct routes. The boat which went to London would have to traverse some portion of the Birmingham Canal system, next 22 miles of the Warwick and Birmingham Canal, next 14 miles of the Warwick and Napton Canal, then 5 miles of the Oxford Canal, then either 93½ miles of the Grand Junction Canal to Brentford, and finally the Thames—or else 100½ miles of the Grand Junction Canal to Paddington, and finally 8½ miles of the Regent's Canal to the Thames at Limehouse. All these waterways belong to different authorities. A cargo proceeding to the Port of Liverpool would traverse first some part of the Birmingham Canal, then 2½ miles of the Birmingham and Warwick Junction Canal, then 17 miles of the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal, then 5½ miles of the Coventry Canal, then 60 miles of the Trent and Mersey Canal, and would then go, probably not without transhipment, by 12 miles of the Weaver Navigation, and then by the Mersey to Lveripool, or, without going down the Weaver, around by the Trent and Mersey to its juncture with the Bridgewater Canal at Preston Brook, and by that canal to the Manchester Ship Canal, and then to the Mersey, but as the narrow boat could not navigate the estuary, transhipment would be necessary. A cargo going to Hull would pass over some miles of the Birmingham Canal, 5½ miles of the Coventry Canal, 26 miles of the Trent and Mersey Canal, 9½ miles of the Trent Navigation, 2½ miles of the Nottingham Canal, 21 miles of the Trent Navigation, 4 miles of the Newark Navigation, 30 miles more of the Trent Navigation, 26 miles of the open Trent River, and then 18 miles of the Humber. Transhipment probably at Nottingham would be necessary.'

It is hardly necessary to enlarge on the difficulties of water transit in this country with this statement before us. The actual experiences of a trader desiring to send goods by water under the present conditions are well set out by Mr. Martin, one of the directors of the Mountsorrel Granite Company in Leicestershire. Granite is, of course, a material particularly suited for transit by water, and the quarries of Mountsorrel are conveniently situated for the purpose as they are close to the Leicester Navigation. Mr. Martin's most instructive remarks are given on page 74 of the Report. They indicate not only the difficulties which beset the trader who wishes to send goods by water, but also the infinitely wider facilities which are offered for making

arrangements for transit by railway. They deserve quotation in full:

'One of the main factors against the maintenance or extension of canal trade is the difficulty of its organisation as compared with despatch by rail. To quote a price by rail is quite simple, and to despatch by rail a matter of the plainest routine, but it is not so with the canals. One private trader will not carry as a matter of certainty for the same money that another will, as the prospect of a return cargo affects the question, so we have to allow sometimes in our price for such an emergency. It is possible that the trader who has quoted for certain deliveries may not be in a position to do the haulage just when the surveyor requires his material, and it is troublesome to hunt up somebody else at the last moment. Surveyors nowadays will have their stone as a rule just when they want it to roll in, and like to have it carted straight to the roller instead of tipped at the roadside and left perhaps for months, as in old days, and that acts often against water carriage. The fact that small consignments are practically ruled out for water carriage operates against the canals for private trade. It is often a matter of difficulty to find out exactly what will have to be paid for haulage, toll, wharfage, especially in the case of private wharves, and this fact increases the office labour in sending out tenders. Then, again, in dealing with the bargee himself there is often trouble. The owner of a couple of narrow boats and his crew are at a great disadvantage when pitted against such competitors as, shall we say, Mr. Evans, the goods manager of the Midland Railway. Although, I believe, they are improved as a class, many of them are rough diamonds, at times they are light-fingered, they are not invariably sober, their education leaves much to be desired, and it is impossible to allow them the run of the works after closing hours. They are not always on the best of terms with the surveyors and carters with whom they have to deal, and threats or actual violence do not tend to the increase of business. The tendency of our subordinate officials, who naturally wish their work done with the least possible friction, is all in favour of the railway method of carriage.'

In many cases the difficulty is no less serious when a small cargo has to be sent a short distance. Several instances of this were given to the Commissioners, but the experiences of Mr. Needham, an agricultural merchant at Worcester, are quoted in the Report, and repeated below as they are conclusive as to the practical impossibility of employing water as a general means of carriage for business purposes under existing circumstances.

'Some time ago my firm were asked to quote a rate for potatoes in boat loads of 28 tons from Holt, which is situated on the Severn about 6 miles above Worcester, to Dudley, and also to Birmingham, the distance in both cases being about twenty-five miles. We quoted a rate which we thought would leave a small margin of

profit, and sent three or four boats to both places as an experiment. On the Dudley route we had to pay separate and distinct charges to the Severn Towpath Company, to the Severn Commissioners, to the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, to the Stourbridge Extension Canal, and to the Birmingham Canal Company. On those to Birmingham we paid separate and distinct charges to the Severn Towpath Company, the Severn Commissioners, the Worcester and Birmingham Canal Company, and the Birmingham Canal Company. In quoting our rate we had based it on the tolls being the same as we were paying for grain, but the Worcester and Birmingham Canal Company charged us a toll of 1*s.* 6*d.* from the Camp Lock at Hawford to Birmingham, although the toll for grain from the Severn Lock at Diglis to Birmingham, some six or seven miles further, is 1*s.* only. That was some years ago. We remonstrated that, as the potatoes were less than one-third the value of wheat and the distance and number of locks were less, the tolls should rather be less than more, but we were told that the grain rate had been reduced as so much foreign corn came up the canal and the railway competition had to be met, whereas, as Holt was some five to seven miles from a station, the potatoes would have to go by canal or be hauled a long way to the station at a higher charge than the extra 6*d.* per ton. Besides this we had to advance the boatmen money sufficient to pay all these various tolls, and it was with great difficulty we could get proper accounts of what they had paid. One boatman, as soon as he received the money from us, went on the drink and never took his boat for the potatoes, and we lost about 4*l.* which we had advanced him. We therefore declined to have any more to do with carrying potatoes.'

But it must not be supposed that decay, disorganisation and neglect are the distinguishing notes of all British waterways. There is an enormous amount of traffic on the Birmingham Canal system, though this it is true is almost all local, the Weaver Navigation, the Aire and Calder, the Shropshire Union, the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, and some others. Of the above the Aire and Calder is the most prosperous financially; it pays out of earnings 3*l.* 4*s.* per cent., and it must be pointed out that it owes its success in great measure to its unique position, which enables it to defy railway competition, more even than it does to the enterprise and ingenuity of its staff. This navigation enjoys every advantage which can make a waterway profitable, proximity to large collieries, a broad and open course leading with few windings to the port of Goole, where large sea-going vessels are ready to receive the consignments it brings down, and an enlightened administration not straitened for funds. Whatever natural advantages it enjoys have been greatly increased by the ingenious use of the compartment-boat system, whereby iron boxes capable of containing forty tons of coal are taken to the colliery on trucks

and then floated in long lines attached by a wire rope to a tug. When they reach the port they are placed one by one in a hoist and their contents are then discharged into the hold of the ship thus saving the transhipment *en route* which is so destructive to coal. The other waterways mentioned above discharge valuable functions, but none of them with quite such satisfactory results to their proprietors. The Leeds and Liverpool Canal, while it has great difficulties to encounter in the way of subsidences due to mining operations, and has also strenuous railway competition to meet on every side, carried nearly $2\frac{1}{2}$ million tons in 1905, but only paid 1 per cent. on its ordinary shares. The Weaver Navigation is, like the Aire and Calder, a canalised river, but, unlike it, is not a profit-making concern. It carried over one million tons in 1905; nearly half of this was salt, and the next largest item chemicals. Here again, locality contributes largely to its success. The Grand Junction Canal is the best instance in Great Britain of a waterway of some length used for the carriage of various kinds of goods without any striking advantages arising from proximity to mines, collieries, or great works. It carried in 1905 $1\frac{3}{4}$ million tons of goods and paid 3 per cent. on its ordinary capital, but this was to some extent due to the proceeds of rents, &c., from property adjacent to the canal. This canal is made up of various small waterways which have been added from time to time to the main line, which is ninety-three miles long. It is possible now to pass from Paddington to Leicester by this canal, but unfortunately traffic is much impeded, it may be said to be almost strangled, by a flight of narrow locks at Watford in Leicestershire. The Shropshire Union belongs to, and the Birmingham Canal system is under the control of, the London and North-Western Railway. The Birmingham Canals carried $7\frac{1}{2}$ million tons in 1705, and the Shropshire Union 605,000. They are both admitted to be well maintained, but after the railway company has paid the dividend the Birmingham system shows a net loss on the working. It is worth noting that both on the Aire and Calder and the Shropshire Union the proprietors act as carriers, and this fact alone saves the railway company from a loss on the working of their system.*

With regard to this fact it is interesting to observe that the Commissioners in their Report make the following comments (paragraph 400):

'The entire want of co-operation or organisation is no doubt largely due to the fact that most of these companies or authorities are merely toll-takers, and have no other interest in the carrying

* Report, paragraph 404.

trade. If, as in the case of railways, the owners of waterways also owned the means of transport and controlled the whole traffic over sufficiently long routes, it is hardly open to question that a far more efficient organisation for through traffic would have everywhere come into existence. In days when canal companies enjoyed almost a monopoly of large classes of traffic they were able to receive a good revenue merely by taking the high tolls which they then took advantage of their position to impose. It is vain to imagine that now, when so far from having a monopoly they are at very serious disadvantages in competition with the immense and far-reaching organisation of railways directed by the skill of highly-trained and well-paid officials, they can live by the same simple system. Yet most of them have made no attempt either to organise or promote through traffic.'

These are a few of the more salient facts which present themselves on inquiry into the existing condition of British waterways. They also help to suggest the answer as to why private enterprise has not come forward to supply the glaring deficiencies admitted by all witnesses. Investors will naturally not put money into concerns which they are forced to believe by the evidence of all experience in this country have no chance of competing successfully against railways. In fact, as the Commissioners point out (paragraph 371) :

' the construction of new canals and the extension or enlargement or modernisation of existing ones, has been in abeyance since the opening of the railway period some seventy years ago. Neither the energy nor the means appear to exist. Few canal companies are in a position to obtain fresh capital for any serious enlargement of their undertakings.'

The causes given by the Commissioners for the investors' want of faith are these :

' (i.) The haphazard system by which canals were originally constructed without any uniformity of gauge or locks, and their ownership by so many different authorities and companies, and the arrest of development and amalgamation in consequence of the advent of railways.

' (ii.) The situation which has been caused by the transfer of many important sections of the waterways to railway companies.

' (iii.) The kind of paralysis or arrest of development which has resulted from all these causes throughout the whole canal system.'

It must in fairness be added that Mr. Inglis objects to (ii), and any deductions drawn from it, on the ground that they are unfair to the railways. He points out that where railways own canals

they often expend upon them amounts which could never have been forthcoming had these canals been in private hands.

'Had it been merely,' he says, 'a matter of securing uniformity of dimensions and unification of ownership these difficulties would surely have been surmounted. . . . The want of faith was due rather to a conviction—which increased in force with the lapse of time—that transport by rail was economically superior to transport by water and that it was better suited to English trading conditions,'

because the railways offered

(i) Cheaper carriage (over the originally exorbitant canal charges).

(ii) Unrestricted power of distribution.

(iii) Quick delivery all over the country, and (as a consequence) the trader's opportunity to carry on his business with a smaller stock and therefore a smaller capital.

The trade of the country has now been practically reconstructed on these lines, and consignments get smaller on the average; this applies even to raw materials.

The arguments of Mr. Inglis which we have summarised above are, of course, frankly put forward as the railway view of the case, but they also express accurately the existing conditions of British internal trade; and, unless it can be shown that they are likely to be revolutionised in the future, they must be very carefully weighed in considering the recommendations of the Commissioners, because, after all, the main point at issue is an economic one and, unless it can be proved that its solution on the lines laid down by the Majority Report is for the benefit of the country as a whole, and not merely for certain districts or trades, then clearly no statesman could advocate heavy expenditure out of State funds for the purpose of improving certain waterways.

The Commission was further asked to inquire whether the causes which had stood in the way of the improvement of our waterways by private enterprise could be removed by legislation. The answer to this is contained in their recommendations, but it may be well to observe in passing that the common belief that the Legislature has done little or nothing to assist our Canal system or to put matters on an equitable footing between canals and railways is a delusion. It is not that the question has not been seriously considered or that well-meaning legislation has not been passed, but the fundamentally grave and irreparable fault was that affairs had been permitted to drift into a condition from which no legislation of a merely restrictive kind could rescue them before any steps were taken by the Government. Railways, like canals, were constructed piecemeal; no allocation of districts,

as in France, was made to the various companies, and they all fought their own way into existence at enormous expense without any general scheme of organisation with a view to the public interest. After the railways had acquired one-third of the canals Parliament awoke to the situation and Select Committees sat both on that question and the problem of railway and canal rates in 1872, 1881, 1882, and 1883. Their labours bore fruit in the Railway and Canal Traffic Act of 1873, and finally in the Act of 1888, by which these matters are still regulated. As a result of the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee of 1872 the Act of 1873 enjoined that henceforth no railway company was to be allowed to acquire control over a canal without the sanction of the Railway Commission, but this excellent provision came much too late to be of any real service in arresting a process already so widely developed. The Select Committee of the House of Commons which sat in 1881 and 1882 recommended that no parliamentary sanction should be given to any further control, direct or indirect, of canals by railway companies. The Act of 1888 put the canals of the country under the supervision of the Board of Trade, established the existing Railway and Canal Commission, and put canal companies under the same obligations as railways with regard to facilities of traffic, undue preference, the keeping of rate-books, &c. Previous Acts of 1854 and 1873 had put railway and canal companies under the same obligations with regard to granting facilities for through traffic, the granting of through rates and tolls, &c. The lack, however, of system which has always prevailed in this country in all matters relating to transport as in the majority of other great national questions (at all events at their initiation) has rendered nugatory to a great extent the well-meant efforts of tardy legislation. It is a truism to say that it is easier to prevent the beginning of mischief than to arrest its growth. Nobody at the beginning thought of dealing with canals and waterways as a great national question in any greater degree than they did with railways, and the present unsatisfactory condition of affairs is the result of this neglect. It may, of course, be argued that the *laissez-faire* principle allows the fittest to survive, but this principle has not been allowed to proceed to the end without any mitigation, nor could railways be allowed to develop without any control. The original theory of the railway was that it was merely an iron road on which anyone might carry on payment of a toll. This was quickly found to be impossible in practice, and the railway companies soon became the sole carriers on their own lines. Canals were not, and never have been, in this position; but it is only fair to point out that so soon as the Legislature recognised the evils that had arisen from

allowing canals and railways to deal with one another or to compete without supervision, it did its best to obtain the soundest views possible and to promote legislation in accordance with them. This is recognised by the Commissioners (paragraph 84), although, as they point out, many complaints were made before them as to the difficulty of obtaining through rates and of the expenses attending any application to the Railway and Canal Commission.

There is plenty of precedent therefore for interference in transport questions by the Legislature, and with the relations between railways and canals. We have now to consider how much farther and in what direction it is desirable to proceed. The majority of the Commissioners have formulated a very comprehensive plan which is interesting and deserves close attention, but it must be noted that at this point several of their best-informed colleagues who have accompanied them thus far, part company with them, in addition to those who write dissentient reports of their own. It comes therefore to this, that, while sixteen of the nineteen Commissioners are able to agree as to the history and present condition of the waterways, and the causes that have prevented the public from investing money in them, only twelve endorse the sweeping recommendations contained in the Majority Report. It must be confessed that it is not easy to understand why four of these gentlemen signed a Report with nearly all the effective part of which they disagree, but it is much more important to observe that two of them, Mr. Killick and Mr. Waldron, are the only directors of canals on the Commission, Sir J. Wilson is a great coalowner, and coal traffic is one of the principal grounds for the Majority recommendations, whilst the fourth, Lord Farrer, is a director of the Midland Railway. These four gentlemen sign reservations which it is impossible to reconcile with the recommendations of the rest of the majority. The three dissentient Reports are signed by Mr. Remnant, M.P., Mr. Davison, the distinguished engineer, and Mr. Inglis, the General Manager of the Great Western Railway.

In reviewing the opinions enunciated by both parties to this controversy it is necessary to consider carefully upon what grounds each side has proceeded, whether they were able to follow the same road for a time or took divergent paths from the first. It will be noticed that a considerable division of the Report is devoted to the question of canals and waterways abroad. The whole problem has been dealt with by our principal industrial and commercial rivals in Europe, and the Commissioners most rightly decided to come to a final decision on the matters submitted to them only after they had seen something

of continental systems with their own eyes, and had collected all the information possible which might help them to a right decision. They therefore visited France, Germany, Belgium and Holland, and saw much and gathered information widely. They were also extremely fortunate in obtaining the assistance of an eminent English engineer resident in Germany, Mr. Lindley, the results of whose devoted labours are enshrined in Vol. VI. of the Commission's publications. This Report contains not only an account of all that the Commission saw, but also a mass of facts and statistics admirably arranged. These should prove almost as useful to continental as to English students of the subject. Mr. Lindley gives no definite conclusions of his own, his motto has been 'Je ne raisonne pas, je constate.' This, of course, was his business, and he has carried it out admirably. But it is quite clear that the influence upon the majority of the Commissioners of what they saw and heard abroad has been considerable. Indeed, a careful perusal of their recommendations leads us inevitably to the conclusion that their continental experiences, and the result of Mr. Lindley's inquiry, have supplied the foundation upon which has been reared the elaborate structure of their recommendations.

Before we can attempt to deal with the recommendations themselves it is necessary to consider shortly the conditions prevailing in the foreign countries with which Mr. Lindley's report deals, and also the causes which have led their Governments to expend public money on a large scale on the development of their waterways. It is perhaps hardly necessary to devote much time to Holland. The inquiry of the Commissioners seems to have led them to the very just conclusion that any analogies which might be supposed to exist between Holland and our own country were of little account. The Fen district and the East of England alone can be said to offer any real resemblance, and in those regions, as in Holland, the artificial waterways owe their origin to purposes of drainage rather than of navigation. On the other hand, the majority of the Commission evidently believe that it would be difficult to lay too much stress upon the examples of France, Belgium, and Germany, and accordingly the Report contains an able summary of their own observations in these countries, and of Mr. Lindley's inquiry. It was rightly concluded that in these three countries alone could conditions be found of such a nature that they could be advanced as analogous to those in England with any hope of carrying conviction; nor did the chairman of the Commission forget to impress upon Mr. Lindley in his instructions before

he began his inquiry the more salient physical features which differentiate those countries from our own.

In France, as in Great Britain, the advent of railways was believed to have given a death blow to water carriage. But the construction of great waterways in France had preceded the Canal era in these islands, and the State assisted the concessionaires. However, the tolls necessary to repay the cost of construction strangled traffic, and the State repurchased the canals in the middle of the last century. A table given in the Report supplies some instructive figures as to the expenditure by the State on waterways between 1814 and 1900, from which it appears that the rate of expenditure per annum more than doubled between 1878 and 1900. The origin of this vast increase is to be found in the gigantic project generally known as the 'plan Freycinet,' as it was inaugurated by that great administrator, M. de Freycinet, in January 1878. It is mentioned in the Report of the Commission, but requires still stronger emphasis, that this great expenditure on the French waterways was only part of a vast design of State subvention for works of national utility. M. de Freycinet was by training and aptitude a great engineer gifted with a capacity for designing and carrying out gigantic projects. At the crisis of the invasion he had, under Gambetta, raised, mobilised, and equipped 500,000 men. He now proposed to supply his country with the means for carrying on the industrial and commercial struggle with her rivals in a fashion never before dreamed of. His plan involved the purchase of railroads on a large scale in the south of France, mostly small lines in a state of bankruptcy. The project, which was designed to benefit the whole country, proved of undoubted benefit electorally to the Republican Party at a critical period.* When the plan was completed the railways would have 18,000 kilometres of new lines, waterways would be increased or improved over the same distance, and all the maritime ports of the country would be deepened and enlarged. The total expenditure was to amount to six milliards of francs; $3\frac{1}{2}$ milliards were to be expended on railway construction, one milliard on waterways, 800 millions on the purchase of railways from concessionaires, and 500 millions on the sea ports. It will be seen, therefore, that the amount to be spent on waterways was only one-sixth of the whole. The scheme was subsequently modified and proved somewhat less grandiose in execution than it had been in design, but nevertheless the State spent, between 1879

* Hanotaux, 'Histoire de la France Contemporaine,' vol. iv. p. 527.

and 1900, 11,209,600*l.* upon the improvement of rivers, and 14,607,611*l.* on the improvement of old and construction of new canals. These improvements have been followed by a great increase of traffic both on railways and waterways; while the total tonnage carried by water has grown 90 per cent., that on the railways has risen by 72 per cent. It must, of course, be noted that the State has devoted even more money and attention to railways under the Freycinet plan than it has to waterways. A fresh scheme of expenditure on waterways was inaugurated by M. Baudin in 1903, under which the State is to grant another sum amounting to 8,242,800*l.* for their improvement and extension. Under this system those interested in the construction of new works are to find the capital under the guarantee of public bodies representing them, and traffic on the new canals is no longer to be toll-free. This, as the Commission point out, is a return to the pre-Freycinet policy. Excellent results have followed the execution of the Freycinet programme in the standardisation of French canals up to a capacity for carrying 300-ton boats, and the total of the mileage so improved is 2072, while, though the total number of boats using them has decreased, the carrying capacity of the existing flotilla has greatly increased. Of the goods carried on the waterways in France in 1905, 66 per cent. consisted of coal and coke or building materials.

In Belgium the development of the waterway system has been even more extensive than in France, and it is evident, even to the eye of the casual traveller, that the country is industrially prosperous to a degree hardly matched elsewhere. From 1831 to 1905 the State expended 15,810,000*l.* on construction and large works, and nearly 5,000,000*l.* on current improvements and maintenance. The waterways are practically all State owned, and the traffic pays light dues which almost cover the cost of annual maintenance and improvement. The waterways in the south-east of the country are now constructed to carry boats of the same size and kind as the prevailing French type, while the traffic from Germany and Holland is being provided for by the reconstruction of the Canal de Junction, which brings the Liège traffic to Antwerp and Dutch waterways from the Meuse. It must not be forgotten that vast quantities of the traffic, both on Dutch and Belgian waterways, come through from Germany to the sea. As in France, railway traffic has grown greatly, along with water-borne traffic, though the proportion of the railway has sunk while that of the waterways has grown (62 per cent. by railway in 1888, 55 per cent. in 1905).

Germany had the same experience as France and England at

the beginning of the railway era. Water-borne traffic was neglected, and the railroads were expected to supply practically all the needs of the nation's commerce. But after the war of 1870, almost while M. de Freycinet was maturing his great programme, the German Government wisely foresaw the commercial development which might be expected from the enterprise of a newly united nation, and they resolved to supply their country with the cheapest and most highly developed means of transport.

'The object was,' to quote Mr. Lindley, 'to increase the carrying powers of existing waterways from the estuaries of the rivers and from industrial areas to the large towns or districts forming centres of consumption, and by the construction of new lines to give a cheap means of transport to important parts of the Empire for their requirements and their products. The programme that has been evolved, and is now being followed out, is to obtain a network of waterways which will to the East of Berlin be navigable for boats of 400 tons and to the West for boats of 600 tons.'

The Prussian Government has spent from 1815 to 1906 13,181,000*l.* on improving its free rivers, and 13,320,600*l.* on the improvement of canalised rivers and canals. No tolls are charged at present on the chief rivers under international and inter-State agreements, but the Government has undertaken, in its new programme of 1905, to propose modifications of this system. Dues on canals and canalised rivers are in force, but are low. The total actual tonnage has grown from 13,600,000 tons in 1875 to 67,000,000 in 1905. No traveller who has known Germany for thirty years can fail to have been struck by the transformation of the Rhine from a river of pleasure into an artery of commerce. Boats of 2000 tons can now penetrate to Mannheim, while boats of 600 pass up the canalised Main to Frankfort. Mr. Lindley gives a most interesting account of the great scheme for the further improvement of Prussian waterways passed in 1905, by which a further expenditure of a sum of nearly 17,000,000*l.* was sanctioned by the Landtag.

We have not the space to follow out more particularly the scope of the new proposals, but it is abundantly evident that both the French and the German Governments consider that they are amply justified by the success of the earlier schemes in carrying still further the development of the vast systems they have already created. Those who desire to study the matter thoroughly in all its bearings should carefully peruse Mr. Lindley's Report. It may help them to realise one side of German industrial and commercial progress which our advo-

cates of Tariff Reform have not put before the country. The important points before us are how far continental examples may wisely be followed here, and how far they are at all applicable to our existing conditions. The Majority Report makes no attempt to conceal the great influence upon its signatories of the continental precedents, and it discusses with discrimination, if not quite completely, the main points of difference between Great Britain and the Continent as they presented themselves to the view of the Commissioners.

We propose to return to this important question later on, but it is now desirable briefly to indicate the main lines of the Majority proposals. They are based on a report and estimates laid before the Commission by the eminent firm of engineers, 'Sir J. Wolfe Barry and Partners'; it may therefore be safely assumed that every reasonable effort has been made to obtain trustworthy advice to lay before the public. Though fully acknowledging the claims of Yorkshire and Lancashire to attention hereafter, the Majority propose in the first place to take Birmingham as the centre, and to enlarge and put in good working order certain main waterways radiating thence to London, Liverpool, Hull, and Bristol. These waterways are roughly but conveniently designated 'the Cross.' The four routes are thus summarised in paragraph 488 of the Report:

ROUTE 1.

'Route 1 is the principal main route between London and Birmingham, and consists of the present Grand Junction Canal, a portion of the Oxford Canal, the Warwick and Napton Canal, and the Warwick and Birmingham Canal. It also includes a branch consisting of the Paddington arm of the Grand Junction Canal and the Regent's Canal.

ROUTE 2.

'Route 2 consists of the River Trent, now under different authorities from its junction with the Humber to its junction with the Trent and Mersey Canal. From Trent Junction, Route 2 consists of the Loughborough Navigation, the Leicester Navigation, and the Leicester branch of the Grand Junction Canal, to Norton Junction, where it meets Route 1, on the main line of the Grand Junction Canal. A combination of parts of Routes 1 and 2 would form the main through route from the Nottingham and Derby district and coalfields to London and the Thames.

ROUTE 3.

'Route 3 is the main route from the Mersey and the Manchester Ship Canal to Birmingham by the Weaver Navigation, the Trent

and Mersey Canal to Fradley Junction, parts of the Coventry and Birmingham Canals, and the Birmingham and Warwick Junction Canal. This route has two principal branches, one from Haywood Junction near Stafford to Wolverhampton, now part of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, the other by the Trent and Mersey Canal from Fradley Junction to Route 2 at Trent Junction. The last-mentioned branch would form part of the main route from the Birmingham and South Staffordshire district to the Humber.

ROUTE 4.

'Route 4 connects Birmingham with the Severn estuary by way of the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, the Severn Navigation, and the Gloucester and Berkeley Ship Canal. It has also a branch from Worcester by the Severn Navigation and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal to Wolverhampton, there joining a branch of Route 3 and so connecting the Severn with the Mersey.'

The reasons for dealing with 'the Cross' first are thus summarised in paragraph 489:

'Before and since the appointment of the Commission it has frequently been pointed out that, if after due consideration it is thought good to embark on a large policy of improving inland navigations, the first step which should be taken is to amalgamate and bring into working order, as main through lines, certain waterways which, taken together, would form four main routes connecting the Midland or Birmingham district with the estuaries of the Thames Mersey, Severn, and Humber. These routes, from the fact that they would intersect or cross each other in the centre of England, have often been referred to in popular language as "the Cross," though the lines of "the Cross" would be of irregular shape. This scheme would take the Birmingham and South Staffordshire district as a centre, and by improvements of the existing waterways to form four main avenues from it, one leading to the Thames estuary, one to that of the Mersey, one to that of the Severn, and one to the Humber. Most of those witnesses who have tried to form general views on the subject, however much they may have differed as to the extent of the improvements and as to the new form of the administration to be adopted, have expressed their adherence to a scheme of this kind.'

We do not propose to enter here into the dimensions desirable to be observed in the construction of a canal in this country. In the consideration of these details the highest engineering talent both at home and abroad has been consulted by the Commission, and if the economic grounds on which their scheme is based are to be accepted, then it would appear that an elaborate consideration of such technical matters would

more appropriately be found in the pages of a journal devoted to engineering subjects. But it is necessary to note that two engineering schemes were left ultimately for the consideration of the Commission, the one that the waterways selected should be improved up to a 300-ton boat capacity, and the other up to 100-ton capacity. The main arguments for and against each of these proposals are set out in paragraphs 710 to 727, and subsequently the estimates put before the Commission by Sir J. Wolfe Barry and Partners for the enlargement of each route to 100 and 300 ton dimensions are given. The Commissioners themselves do not seem to have come to a definite conclusion on the matter, but we can hardly believe that, with all the figures before them and the backward state of water-carriage in this country in their minds, public authorities, if they determined to do anything, could hesitate between the two alternatives. The weight of evidence given before the Commission is very strongly in favour of the 100-ton scheme. The great majority of witnesses when they were asked indicated a boat of that, or an even smaller, size as the more convenient unit, and in the end the Commissioners, though they do not directly commit themselves to recommending the 100-ton scheme, go so far as to found some of their most interesting observations on the 'supposition that the second scheme, viz. that of ac- 'cepting the 100-ton standard as the maximum for the greater 'part of the total mileage, with higher standards for the river 'portions of the four routes, is the one which, for practical 'reasons, will be adopted.' This conclusion seems to us eminently sensible. It is clear from the report of Sir J. Wolfe Barry that on all the four routes the cost will be almost exactly doubled if the 300-ton scheme instead of the 100-ton were adopted.

It must not be forgotten that certain instructions were given to the Commission before it began its inquiries in order to confine its proposals within the bounds of a possible expenditure. By the fourth term of their Reference they were to inquire into 'the prospect of benefit to the trade of the country com- 'patible with a reasonable return on the probable cost.' There is some ambiguity about this phrase. It would appear that some Commissioners believed the 'return' intended was an indirect one only. In the end some state that they believe there will be a direct return, while others think the benefit will be indirect, and all those who have signed the Majority Report seem to agree that more or less indirect benefit must accrue to the country. But the question then arises whether that return will be 'reasonable.' M. Colson, whose practical and theoretical knowledge of these matters is probably second to no one's,

has some * interesting remarks on this point. After pointing out that rates of transport have reached a level below which they cannot sink very much, and that speed of transit cannot be very much increased, as it has been in the past, he continues :

'We may assume that the least progress will always be productive. But we expose ourselves to fall into grave errors when, in the calculations which are to guide us in these matters, we make too much of indirect benefits sometimes problematical. When any operation seems of a kind to give in return more losses than benefits, it is perilous to count too much, in order to fill the gap, on indirect benefits, the existence, and especially the exact origin, of which are often in doubt.'

It will be well to bear these warnings in mind when we consider the proposals made by the Majority Report. They are entitled to the highest respect and the most careful attention, but, before adopting them and undertaking so vast a work, a prudent Ministry will look in all directions before they definitely embark upon the tremendous expenditure of public money involved. What then is the estimate of the cost of their proposals put before us by the Commissioners? These estimates are of course founded on that of Sir J. Wolfe Barry, and in the cases of all four routes include †

'works of every description (other than water supply, wharves, warehouses and terminal arrangements), the acquisition of property necessary for the improvements, compensation for disturbance and severance, the provision of facilities for carrying on the traffic during reconstruction and a due provision for contingencies. They do not include water supply, with regard to which separate estimates have been prepared in our own office, nor do they include the cost of parliamentary, legal and engineering expenses. They do include the cost of making new tunnels of dimensions sufficient to pass a single line of barges in the case of both standards of boats. They also include the cost of duplicating locks and lifts at certain places but not of lighting waterways at night, nor of providing for electric traction. A necessary measure will be the provision of terminal arrangements, including warehouses and docks or wharves. These are not included in the estimates, as the locality may reasonably be expected to provide them at its own cost in most if not in all cases, according to the example set by towns on the Continent. It should also be remembered that the investigations of Sir J. Wolfe Barry and Partners was confined to the four main routes and that, therefore, their estimates do not include the cost of such improvements as may be necessary on the more important branches and feeders of these routes.'

* Op. cit. p. 808. † Report, paragraph 749.

A computation has been made by the highly competent engineering staff of the Commission of the probable cost of water supply and of the annual charges for upkeep. These, together with the Barry estimates, are given in a general summary on pages 155 and 156 of the Report, but the cost of acquisition is not included. The general result is that for all the routes the total cost of improvements and water supply work out at 17,533,910*l.*, and the total annual charge at 1,004,181*l.*; this includes interest and sinking fund on total cost at 3*l.* 12*s.* 3*d.* per cent., cost of pumping, and of management and maintenance. The total annual expenditure after improvement is estimated at 1,098,025*l.*, which includes various items of expenditure now borne by the existing companies under the heading of 'other expenditure'; from this must be subtracted the present revenue derived from 'other sources' (rents &c.), not tolls, which amounts to 133,462*l.*, and the future revenue required from tolls will be 964,563*l.* The gross revenue from tolls in 1905, the latest year for which the Commission received information, was 434,509*l.* Therefore, accepting all these estimates as correct, which we may conveniently do, the additional amount required from tolls in order to obtain a direct return on the expenditure will be about 530,000*l.* Is this additional income likely to be obtained and from what sources? It must be obtained from tolls alone, for the Authority which is to control the new canal system is not to act as carrier according to the recommendations of the Commission (paragraphs 317 *et seq.* and 815). 'There is 'much reason to believe that if on improved canals trainloads of '260 tons could be conveyed in shorter time than loads of 50 to 60 'tons are conveyed on the present canals, tolls remaining at the 'existing level, there would be a large reduction on the cost per 'ton per mile of conveyance.' The reduction in cost of transport would be effected through the competition of carriers, who would be enabled to carry at less cost on a larger and better waterway in consequence of the increase in the weight of cargoes and the saving of time and labour. If, however, the authority controlling the amalgamated waterways were to reduce the toll per ton per mile, the total cost of conveying cargo would be still further reduced. The Report further states that at present coal can be conveyed by an inland waterway to London from Leicestershire for about 6*s.* 8*d.* per ton, about the same rate as by railway. By a reduction in tolls and cost of haulage on the improved canals this rate, they believe, might be reduced one half. The argument of the Majority is that the policy to be pursued is to make the improved waterways self-supporting, except so far as interest on the cost of acquisition is concerned, which is a burden that the

State should take upon itself. The present state of our canals is due to legislative errors in the past which have prevented rates being lowered as they have been abroad, therefore the State may well repair its mistakes as far as possible by the proposed outlay. The Commissioners further recommend the kind of public authority which, in their opinion, should take over the canals and organise the new system. This is to be a Board consisting of three Commissioners, with an efficient staff under them. It is also suggested that this Board might be closely connected with or subordinate to the Development Commissioners created by the new Act. With regard to finance, it is recommended that, somewhat on the analogy of the Port of London Act of 1908, the stock issued in respect of the transfer and acquisition of the canal companies' property should be in the nature of a free grant or of a loan with long deferred date of repayment, or of a combination of the two; that the State should guarantee the stock issued, or that the loans raised for carrying out improvements should be guaranteed by the State; and that the commencement of the Sinking Fund for the purpose of redemption should be deferred for a period of years.

Such are the principal proposals for the reconstruction of our waterways put forward in the Majority Report. They are bold, sweeping and attractive. Even if there be dissent as to details, it is probable that if the views of the Commissioners, and the reasoning on which they are based, be accepted, then the Government would in the main adopt their proposed system, for it is logical, and, by putting control of the waterways completely in the hands of the State, offers the best solution of difficulties which cannot be otherwise surmounted. It is perfectly clear, both from the whole history of canals in this country during the last seventy years and from the evidence given on behalf of public bodies and important trading companies before the Commissioners, that neither these public bodies nor other interested parties are at all likely to find the money required to put our waterways on the footing demanded by modern requirements. There is also nothing even approaching a definite promise on the part of anyone that, if the canals were to be reconstructed at the public expense, local bodies or traders would find the money necessary to construct the required accommodation in the way of ports, wharves and warehouses. There are only hints that it might be done. It may perhaps be said that before taking action the Government should compel the parties to be benefited to undertake this part of the expense. This might conceivably be done, but there are considerable difficulties in the way of coercing public authorities. The point rather to be taken into account is whether, when we consider the reluctant attitude

assumed by the local bodies and the trades likely to benefit, there exists in this country any large and genuine demand at all for the sweeping action and the vast expenditure recommended by the Commissioners.

But it may be argued that this objection could be met if it can be proved by evidence satisfactory to business men that the expenditure proposed would give a direct return, i.e. that there would be what the fourth Reference to the Commission calls 'prospect of benefit to the trade of the country compatible with a reasonable return on the probable cost.' This, the Commission has assumed, refers to both a direct and indirect return; the sentence may be ambiguous, but it was certainly intended to have a business aspect, both from the point of view of the individual and of the Treasury. Some of the Commissioners are stated to hold that there would be a direct return, and the Commission has certainly done its best to ascertain what is the foundation, if any, for this conviction; but few investigations could, in truth, offer much less prospect of a satisfactory conclusion. The British trader is the last person in the world to give away the full story of his business; neither is he likely to make promises as to what he will do in the future if a certain hypothetical state of affairs comes about. However, the Commissioners did all they could to ascertain what prospects there were of increased trade on improved waterways. The answers of witnesses are stated in the Report (paragraph 817) to have been for the most part 'vague and general' in character, so circulars were sent out to traders, manufacturers and mineowners on the four routes of 'the Cross' asking what traffic they would be prepared to put on an improved route if cost of carriage were reduced 25 or 50 per cent. These inquiries elicited no very 'numerous or exact assurances,' as indeed might have been anticipated. There does, however, seem to have been some probability of a considerably increased traffic held out in the replies received from coalowners in South Staffordshire, Warwickshire and the Nottingham district. The replies from traders taken together indicate that with a 50 per cent. reduction in tolls about $4\frac{1}{4}$ million tons, or with 25 per cent. reduction $1\frac{1}{2}$ million tons, of total traffic may ultimately pass along Route 1 from Birmingham to London. This traffic would include all kinds of goods, but about three million tons of coal were indicated as likely to be sent per annum to London from those districts alone, in the case of 50 per cent. reduction, and this prospect the Commissioners believe is borne out by 'the intrinsic probabilities of the case.' These probabilities arise from the proved existence of vast quantities of unworked coal in Staffordshire, Warwickshire and neighbouring counties, access to the Thames *via* the Grand

Junction Canal at Brentford and Limehouse, and the fact that that canal, as well as the Regent's Canal, in traversing the north of London passes numerous coal wharves and sites convenient for further wharves, and that the Regent's Canal at Limehouse terminates 'in a fine dock on the busiest part of the Thames.' It must certainly be allowed that these arguments are worthy of consideration, and that, though they offer no certainty, if we accept them as they stand, they do present a probability of a large direct return at some future time. What then is given by the Commission as the return likely to be furnished by the traffic hoped for? We have already learned that the amount required over and above the existing gross revenue from tolls in order to meet the annual expenditure would be about 530,000*l.* (paragraph 792), and a much larger amount if the cost of unification and acquisition is placed on the revenue of the waterways (paragraph 793). But in the dissentient Reports of Mr. Davison and Mr. Inglis reasons are given, which must be seriously weighed, for believing that no real prospect of the kind exists. Mr. Davison points out that while the Report estimates that a ton-mileage of 1,158,000,000 or a traffic-intensity of 2,173,000 tons per mile on the 533 miles of the main routes is required at a rate of 0·2*d.* per ton per mile, with a slightly increased rate for local traffic in order to raise the extra revenue required, yet

'in France, with about seven times the length of waterway, only about 2½ times the ton mileage estimated by the Report (per "the Cross") as required is carried, in Belgium with nearly double the length only about two-thirds is carried, while in Germany with nearly twelve times the length, including the Rhine and the Elbe, only about eight times the ton mileage is carried.'

As to the sources whence such traffic is to arise Mr. Davison therefore declares himself sceptical. There are no complete returns kept of the intensity of traffic on all our existing waterways, but some do exist, and it appears that at present on the widely used Weaver and on the Aire and Calder the intensity of traffic averages about 710,000 tons per mile. If, therefore, hopes of a direct return are to be realised an astounding leap upwards in traffic must be achieved. But Mr. Inglis advances other objections of a less general character. He urges that an immense increase in coal traffic on the new waterways is essential to the success of the scheme.*

* Incidentally it may be indicated that all the seven dissentients from the main recommendations of the Commission deprecate rendering special assistance to the coal trade with London from the Midlands.

This involves at least two million tons of new coal traffic by the improved waterways to London per annum, and this he thinks not a trustworthy estimate for many reasons which he sets out at length and marshals with much ability. We have not space to enter into them. But we may briefly indicate them as (1) the undoubted and growing tendency of the British trader to prefer his consignments in small quantities, (2) the fact that means of distribution in London for canal-borne coal do not exist and would have to be provided, whereas railways have 155 depôts conveniently situated within the metropolitan area, (3) rail transit is preferred to canal transit for coal in the United Kingdom almost wherever they compete, (4) there are over half a million wagons in use on railways owned by private individuals or companies. Though no single one of the reasons put forward by the dissentients may be enough in itself to destroy an assumption of direct returns on the probable cost, yet taken together they are calculated to make reasonable people inquire whether the Majority have not been wise in basing their recommendations rather on the hope of some indirect profit to the community.

We are thus brought to the real problem which will have to be solved by the Government when it comes to consider seriously the desirability of carrying into effect the recommendations of the Commission. This involves a decision as to how far Great Britain is justified by the prospect of benefit to the country at large in following the example of foreign countries and making a prodigious change in her policy on questions of internal transport; also whether such action as proposed would be justified, having regard to her previous action. In discussing both these points many grave considerations must arise incidentally, and to some of these we have already alluded. One, which is indeed fundamental to the whole question, is that as to State action in general. This is certainly not the occasion for discussing in full so vast a problem. The Majority Report generalises on the subject in one paragraph (465), some of the signatures to which we confess somewhat surprise us. It runs thus:

'It may fairly be held that the State is concerned in insuring to its citizens by its own action, if private enterprise fails to accomplish this end, the best and most economic modes of transport, so that industry and commerce may be carried on as effectively as possible, especially in view of the strong competition now taking place in the markets of the world.' *

* This view is particularly objected to in a strong note by Lord Farrer on p. 192.

We do not propose to argue this question now, but if this proposition once finds general acceptance it seems to us that it might also justify State action in a hundred other directions and might be easily and plausibly expanded to excuse high protective duties. But we are not a logical people and we might perhaps be imagined as nationalising railways and canals or the means of production without adopting protection, though such a course is, we admit, hardly probable.

If then we grant that this sweeping proposition is to be accepted without demur we readily confess that all the proposals of the Majority are justified supposing they can be shown to afford the best means of attaining the desired result, viz. that industry and commerce should be carried on as effectively as possible in order to compete with the foreigner.

But how far are we justified in regarding foreign experience in the matter of waterways as a reasonable indication of the probable result in our own case? It is agreed that the Governments of France, Belgium and Germany have received no direct return on their expenditure, but it is said the indirect return has amply justified it. This is contested by M. Colson,* who thinks that a much smaller amount of public money, if it had been spent on improving railroads or inducing them to reduce their rates, would have shown a much better return. However, there can be no doubt that in all three countries traffic, both by water and rail, has shown enormous expansive capacity since the improvement of the waterways. It must not be forgotten that traffic on our railways has also enormously expanded during these years along with expanding trade. Should we have done better with improved waterways? Or is it that the physical and economic conditions in those countries differ from ours and justify expenditure on waterways while analogous expenditure here might not have the same success?

If we take the case of Germany, it will be readily seen that the physical conformation of the country adapts it in every way for the development to a high degree of an extensive system of waterways. The Rhine is a great natural artery running up into the heart of the land, and now rendered navigable for barges of 2000 tons as far as Mannheim; the Elbe is also an artery for commerce of considerable dimensions, extending for nearly 400 miles to the Austrian frontier; the Main, the Weser, the Oder, and the Vistula are all great waterways which are of the highest importance. Seven main rivers carried 80 per cent. of the inland water-borne traffic of Germany in 1905, the Rhine and the

* Op. cit. pp. 814, 816, 819, 820.

Elbe carried two-thirds of it. The truth is that the German canal system has been almost entirely constructed with a view to linking up the great rivers. The water supply is more than ample, and the country in great measure consists of vast plains which offer little or no resemblance to the surface of our own land. France again is largely endowed with great natural waterways, and the Meuse and the Scheldt are the main arteries in Belgium, a country which now possesses the most highly developed waterway system in Europe. But, as is pointed out in the Majority Report, the north-eastern corner of France and the south of Belgium are the regions which present the nearest physical analogy to English conditions. Here the existence of large coalfields has led to the extensive use of waterways, and in that district of France a great new canal is now in course of construction, the Canal du Nord, towards the making of which the local coalowners' associations are large contributors, thus showing a confidence in water-borne commerce which is lacking in England. But the Commissioners rightly have not pressed geographical considerations too far. It seems to us that economic arguments are more deserving of consideration.

In the first place it must be noted that in each of these three countries the Government, if it does not actually own the railways, yet effectually controls their policy.

In France the Government gives a financial guarantee to the railways and owns some. It owns the waterways and prevents any real competition between railways and waterways by forbidding the lowering of railway rates below a certain minimum,* so as to drive water carriage out of the field. The waterways are thus strongly protected, and without such protection would undoubtedly not hold their own as they do to-day. The State, in fact, subsidises goods traffic both on railways and canals to the same degree, calculated by Mr. Lindley at 0.16*d.* per ton mile. In Germany the railways are now mostly State-owned, in Prussia, with which we are almost solely concerned, entirely so, and so are the waterways. The Government can therefore manipulate the distribution of traffic as it likes without injuring any of the investing public in the process. Mr. Lindley calculates that the interest on the money expended by the State on waterways amounts to a subsidy on traffic to the amount of 0.10*d.* per ton mile, omitting the Rhine and the Elbe, including them to 0.042*d.* Again, in Belgium both railways and waterways are owned by

* This process is fully described by M. Waddington in an interesting paper prepared for the Commission and published with Mr. Lindley's Report, p. 117.

the State.* 'The result is' (par. 561) 'that there is no hostile 'competition between different interests by means of competitive 'rates between railways and waterways.' 'We are informed 'that the Government do in fact so adjust railway rates as to 'prevent a crushing competition of the railway department 'against waterway carriers.' Such in fact was the evidence of Sir Cecil Hertslet, H.M. Consul-General at Antwerp. Mr. Lindley calculates (Report, p. 53) that the subsidy given by the Belgian Government to water-borne traffic amounts to 0.23*d.* per ton mile. But both France and Germany are abandoning their old policy of free waterways and are making the localities benefited contribute. In France very material assistance is forthcoming from the coal trade. In Germany even the great free rivers are to have tolls imposed, and the first steps have already been taken in the Federal Council.† It may also be noted as a general proposition true of all three countries that their traders deal in much larger consignments than ours do, and that rapidity of transit has not grown there to be so much of the essence of all the national business as it has here. It is admitted that both in France, Belgium and Germany, in spite of the great advantages offered by natural facilities and vast State expenditure, water-borne traffic requires the protection of the State in order to resist successfully the competition of the railway. On the other hand, the State has saved its railways from loss by saving them from expenditure. Heavy mineral traffic has been to a great extent transferred to the water, and, therefore, no great provision needs to be made for it on the railways. The State guarantee saves the French shareholder. In Belgium the tolls imposed on waterways nearly balance the expenditure, while both in France and Germany the State is now endeavouring to recoup itself (at all events in part) for its expenditure on the great rivers.

The differences therefore, economic even more than physical, which exist between these countries, whose waterway policy is held up to us for imitation, and our own seem very great and not lightly to be dismissed. The Commission appear hardly to have appreciated them at their true value, though they have not ignored them. None of the arguments we have indicated present merely the railway point of view, though this side of the question must of course not be entirely passed over, and indeed, with Mr. Inglis's statement before us, it is not likely to be. The main points on which the railway companies feel justified in protesting are that

* The State generally carries goods to and from the railway stations in State-owned carts and lorries.

† See The Times, February 4 and 17 and March 9, 1910.

the Government has allowed them to struggle on without assistance from the day of their inception. They have encountered the enormous expenditure imposed upon them by landowners and parliamentary procedure, and later by the exacting claims of competition, the gradually growing requirements of the Board of Trade with regard to the comfort and safety of passengers and the regulation of rates. It is now proposed to expend a large sum of public money in buying the canals and running them to compete with railways. The railway advocates show no gratitude when they are told that their own waterways are scheduled for purchase, even though they allege their upkeep to be a most onerous obligation, nor are they consoled when they are assured that on the Continent railway traffic has grown along with that on canals, and that it will be an excellent thing for them to be deprived of their heavy mineral traffic, which they are informed is unremunerative. Mr. Inglis on their behalf points out that mineral traffic is far from unremunerative to our railways, though the rates are low. Mr. Rendell, goods manager of the Great Western Railway, stated in evidence that more than half of that company's revenue from goods traffic came from minerals, the same statement is true of the Midland, Great Central and Great Northern Railways. We may point out also that, though in Belgium and Germany it may be admitted that the Government has profited by transferring much heavy traffic from railways to waterways, chiefly by saving large expenditure on rolling stock and new lines and terminal accommodation, such a condition can have no analogy here where the railway companies have already incurred the expense demanded by increasing calls of that nature. It is argued that it would be grossly unfair to the shareholders for the Government to deprive them now of some of that traffic by transferring it to waterways owned and maintained by the State.

But the whole comparison between rates for the carriage of goods in this country and abroad is alleged by the advocates of the railway companies to be misleading. Though the matter may be germane to the canal problem, it is far too large for minute consideration here. But it must be remembered that the low rates on German railways are part of a general economic policy pursued by the Government which has not been hitherto accepted in this country, and German rates do not include collection and delivery as is the case here. We cannot see how English rates can be much lower so long as our railways have to pay interest on a much larger primary cost than continental railways. The English trader too, as we have already stated, demands a much more rapid service than his continental rival.

The advocates of the railways do not, however, meet the charge that they grant preferential rates for foreign produce, and, indeed, it cannot be refuted. It is true they have to pay a dividend. Nevertheless, the existence of such a system heavily handicaps the British trader, and it cannot be doubted that it lies at the root of many complaints which have led to the demand for the revival of our decaying canal system. These complaints come from agriculturists and manufacturers alike, but it is admitted by the Commissioners that farmers make little use of canals in any part of the country, and will not do so even if they be improved (par. 328–31, 478). It is also admitted that only a portion of the population can benefit directly by the policy proposed, though it is alleged that their increased prosperity will in the end benefit all alike. This theory seems to us closely allied to the protectionist arguments advanced for the purpose of defending high duties on foreign goods.

We cannot pretend to enter now upon the discussion necessary to discover whether such a policy can be properly defended under our existing economic system. We feel certain that any Government which embarked upon it would have to meet with widespread discontent from important districts not likely to be directly benefited. The coal-owner in Scotland and the North of England will certainly protest vigorously against taxation imposed to help his competitors elsewhere. This is a selfish attitude, but no more so than that of the Midland manufacturer who demands that the rates for the carriage of his produce should be lowered by the construction or improvement of waterways at public expense. It may be well worth consideration whether the Government might not find some means of inducing the railways to reduce their rates by a subsidy of some nature. This might meet the existing difficulty, which is undoubtedly grave, viz. that the foreign importer enjoys preferential rates, or it might be done by relieving railways of their heavy contributions to local rating. It is true this would only postpone the real solution of the problem, but it might help us on our way, and, like many such partial solutions in this country, might last much longer than appears probable now. It would at least benefit all trades and industries (including agriculture) and all parts of the country alike; it might help to arrest the migration of staple industries to the seaboard, which appears to be a tendency to some extent, if not mainly, due to high rates of carriage. It would at all events give us time to think before the country once for all adopts the sweeping conclusion of the Majority Report quoted above, with regard to the obligations of the Government on matters of transport. We are far from saying that we

may not be obliged ultimately to adopt the policy of our European rivals in this respect, but it is certain that it ought not to be taken up lightly and unadvisedly. If we are to nationalise our whole transport system, let it be done in a thorough and comprehensive manner and not in the haphazard fashion in which we allowed railways to grow up and canals to be ruined. To take canals and leave railways would involve much bitter controversy, though it would inevitably bring about in the end the acquisition of railways by the State. Main roads, canals and railways, must all form part of one great scheme which might be dealt with piecemeal, but should all be thought out together.

For the consideration of this great problem the labours of this Commission have most ably opened the way, and when, if ever, the time for action arrives they will be found to have left little of their own branch of the subject to be investigated by others. We have not dealt with the recommendations regarding Scotland made by the Commissioners, which raise few points of dispute and are unanimous, nor have we discussed the elaborate machinery which it is proposed to set up should the recommendations regarding British waterways be accepted *in toto*. These after all are really matters of detail and should not distract attention from the very grave economic problem raised by the Report.

Art. II.—THE WORK OF REFORM: MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT—CAROLINE NORTON.

1. *A Study of Mary Wollstonecraft and the Rights of Woman.* By Emma Rauschenbusch-Clough, Ph.D. London: Longmans. 1898.
2. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman.* By Mary Wollstonecraft. London: 1792. (Re-edited by Mrs. H. Fawcett, Fisher Unwin: 1891, and E. R. Pennell, Walter Scott: 1892.)
3. *Letters to Imlay.* Edited by W. Godwin, 1798, re-edited by C. Kegan Paul, 1909, and R. Ingpen. Hutchinson: 1909.
4. *Life of Mrs. Norton.* By Jane Perkins. London: Murray. 1909.
5. *Pamphlets by Caroline Norton:* Separation of Mother and Child—the Law of Custody considered, 1837. Laws for Englishwomen in the Nineteenth Century, 1854. Letter to the Queen—Lord Cranworth's Marriage and Divorce Bill, 1855.

'Au fond de tout talent de femme il y a un bonheur manqué.' The epigram, with its surface wit, approximates to a psychological truth which an unprejudiced observation of what is christened feminity corroborates. No one disputes exceptions to the rule. From time out of mind there have been women whose intellectual energies or imaginative endowments have germinated and borne fruit although their heart's desire has found satisfaction, although, for them, ties of affection have brought neither satiety nor disillusion. Mrs. Browning's gifts survived a happy marriage. 'If it had not been for Lewes' perhaps George Eliot's novels would never have been written,'* a special pleader for women's prerogatives asserts. And if this is an exaggeration, doubtless it was to association with Lewes, and the men into whose companionship their connexion threw her, that she owed in part the tolerant and wide apprehension displayed, despite some ineradicable pedantry, in her delineation of characters and circumstances.

But the fact remains that in a majority of instances the 'bonheur manqué,' the sense of an emotional blank where natural possibilities have been too long postponed, where natural hopes have been unfulfilled, or where the heart has suffered

* 'The English Woman,' by David Staars, trs. by J. M. E. Brownlow. Smith, Elder and Co. 1909.

forfeiture of its great possessions, has played an all-important part in the story of feminine achievements. The consciousness of emotional loss has initiated efforts which have raised women high in the ranks of literature and, in another sphere, given them prominence as promoters of social reform. And whether it be excess of emotionalism, with its attendant catastrophes (George Sand); emotionalism suppressed (Charlotte Brönte, 'My life 'is a pale blank'*); or whether it be the infirmities of emotionalism deflected from its natural outlets, attempting that self-sufficiency of sex of which hysterical schoolgirl friendships are premonitory symptoms, no psychologist can ignore the determinating force which the emotional element, normal or abnormal, healthful or morbid, exercises over a woman's nature and career. It directs her mentality, moulds her intelligence, stimulates her activities, and, paramountly—emotion being intrinsically individualistic as opposed to the non-individuality of intellect—it accentuates the feminine type of personality. Further the sexual emotion, wherever sane and wholesome instincts are untampered with, being the strongest, the popular phrase may generally be inverted, and in seeking the key to perplexing enigmas of feminine conceptions, principles and conduct, it will be wise to follow the injunction 'cherchez 'l'homme.'

At a moment when men are disposed to weigh the value of women as agents and arbitrators in public life, a special interest accrues to the lives of women whose protests have contributed most to the processes of reform. The recent re-issue of Mary Wollstonecraft's love letters and the publication of the life of Caroline Norton have placed in view two such personalities, belonging to consecutive generations, the one in the three years' tragedy of her Imlay connexion, the other in the life-long struggle of a calamitous marriage bond, for the severing of which—whatever might be the wrongs and suffering entailed on the wife—no adequate legal provision existed.

Dissimilar in station, upbringing, tone and temper of mind, both were women of unusual intelligence, with talents which won for each, in very different order, an acknowledged position amongst the men and women of their times. They possessed, and to excess, excitable temperaments, strong emotions, and, slightly qualified in Caroline Norton's case, a disregard for the opinions of the world outside the radius of their affections. And the study of their lives illustrates the working of this emotional element, inherent in all women who, possessing the fundamental

* 'Charlotte Brönté,' by A. Birrell.

qualities common to either sex, do not lack the sharply differentiated capacities of instinct, sense and soul which, severing womanhood from manhood, give to women the highest possibilities of individual developement and the only possibilities of individual completeness in the scheme—dual and complementary—of outward things. This element is all-important. Suppressed it is a negation of woman's place as a daughter of earth in the economy of material existence. Over-stimulated its functions are perverted and from an energising force it becomes a maladive violence. But invigorating or detrimental to physical and moral well-being, its preponderance as a motive of action can never be ignored in the final determination of the question—so often discussed with reticences which invalidate every conclusion—concerning women's legitimate position in the rational organisation of social life at the present stage of civilisation and political progress.

I.

Few more singular tributes of a husband's affection exist than William Godwin's Memoirs of his wife, prefixed to her posthumously published works.* From these Memoirs, from the Imlay Letters, from semi-autobiographical passages in her fictions, and from other documents open to investigation,† her personality emerges in its markedly dual aspect as the authoress both of the 'Vindication' and of the celebrated love letters. The first is perhaps the ablest indictment extant of the gross insufficiencies of feminine education and of the conditions of eighteenth-century sex-relationship. In the Letters the veil is drawn from that section of her life where emotionalism dominated. Nor, reading their open confession of a temperament where passion had the courage of honesty, is it a matter of surprise to learn that she incurred the censure of the typical celibate in the path of reform, Miss Martineau, who asserts that 'women 'who would improve the condition and character of their sex 'must be . . . rational and dispassionate.' ‡

It would be difficult to conceive a girlhood more saddened by circumstance than that which fell to the lot of the intellectually most brilliant woman of the eighteenth century. It was a century when men lived their lives on an incredibly low level. The coarseness of prevalent manners, wedded in towns to an extravagant artificiality, gave outward expression to the debase-

* Letters to Imlay, The Wrongs of Woman, etc., etc.

† Godwin and his Contemporaries. C. Kegan Paul. 1876.

‡ Quoted by M. David Staars.

ment of moral instinct. No spiritual tempest, save that of the Wesley revivalists, rose to sweep away the miasma of ill-living. The Middle Ages had been the era of contrast and conflict. The hands of the brute were unfettered, but the wings of the spirit were free. The sinner confronted the saint in the exterior world, the sinner confronted the saint in the individual soul. Spirit and body waged open war. By the eighteenth century they had signed an ignoble armistice, Faith—the ideal of God—slept, Chivalry—the ideal of man—was dead. The soul of man was wrapped in lethargy, its vision paralysed. Primitive brutalities walked, slightly masked, in the sensuality, the intemperance and the profligacy of a materialistic civilisation. William Blake alone in art preached his apocalypse of heaven and hell. Wesley and his disciples alone amongst the ranks of divine zealots preached the evangel of sin and holiness.

From the first Mary's hand was set to the sword. Born in 1759, her childhood was the stormy childhood of an insurgent spirit subjected to the caprices of an idle, roving father, whose uncontrolled temper, alternating with facile kindliness, vented itself on all around. At nineteen she elected to quit the uncongenial home atmosphere, and for two years occupied the post, scarcely more congenial, of companion to a Bath lady, where, however, she could prosecute her constant endeavours at self-education. Recalled at twenty-one (1780) to her father's house, her mother's death released her from further home obligations, and she became mistress of her own destiny, dependent upon her own exertions; became also the mainstay of two sisters, who, without her talents, shared the family ill-health and deplorable excitability of nerves.

Thus her early years closed, leaving memories of violence, under which as a child she had agonised, resisting with all the force and fire of her nature, and not ineffectually, the tyrannies of authority stripped of all that makes authority venerable. Yet, it is characteristic of a mind which, for ever serving two masters, swayed between vision and reality, that writing when youth, with all the troubles that seem so intolerable to youth, lay in the mist of the far-off, her imagination cast its coloured glamour over the past. And recalling paths where 'hope 'scattered its flowers' with spendthrift hands, a cry of regret comes from the woman to whom maturity had brought scant joy and many griefs: 'as I write I could almost scent the fresh 'grass of spring—of that spring which never returns.'*

The explanation may be divined. Carlyle's sketch of an

* Wrongs of Woman.

'Ariel imprisoned in a brickbat! . . . sublimely virtuous endowment, in practice, suffering, misfortune, death—by destiny, and also by desert . . . the English Mignon . . .' is wide of the mark. Yet, treating of Mary's character there is a point of view ignored by commentators bent on evolving a personality in strict accordance with the feminine ideal her dogmatic utterances inculcate. Lovable she was, all testimonies agree; unselfish, quixotically self-sacrificing, with an intellectualised common-sense amounting to theoretical wisdom and an overplus of generosity to outbalance wisdom; drawing persons of feebler mental stamina to shift responsibility on to her willing shoulders. But she possessed an additional quality, compensating for many of the ills of life—the whole record of her actions confirms the supposition. With all its alleviating excitements the love of adventure was undeniably hers. Belonging to the class of provincial bourgeoisie, the daily domesticities of existence were strictly circumscribed, her interests were bounded by the narrow horizon of an uneducated family and an uneducated acquaintance. Mary had inherited from her vagrant Irish father, whose restlessness took the futile form of constant change of habitation, his wandering frame of mind. Associated with fearless curiosity and an eager determination to explore and conquer the unknown, this constituted, if not the axis on which the wheel of enterprise turned, the magnet which drew novel experiences towards her.

The fevered aspirations of her girlhood, her hungry acquisition of knowledge, were part and parcel of her desire to break bounds. Intellectual pursuits adopted by men of sedentary tastes not seldom in a woman indicate tastes of a contrary kind. Debarred from physical exercises and the free 'Wanderleben,' they are her substitute for open-air adventure. The body, perforce a homekeeper, the mind becomes the vagabond. The open book of the study-table is not for her a rest-house of thought, it is a door of escape from her stationary environment. Mary sought this outlet. Moreover, with a premature accentuation of will, learning self-reliance from association with inferior natures, mental attainments became not only a means of emancipation from squalid trivialities but assured financial independence when she cast off the yoke to which she had resentfully submitted.

For many years to come Mary was destined to live a life of constant anxiety and pecuniary embarrassment. As a teacher and school-keeper, in or near London, she was the leading spirit and principal breadwinner of a group of indigent women: her two sisters and the idolised friend and monitress of her youth,

Fanny Blood. On Fanny Mary's enthusiasms had concentrated themselves in one of those girl-friendships of vague sentimentality which, if they survive immature womanhood, usually denote on one side or the other a weakness of moral fibre or a defect in the emotional organisation. Mary 'loved Fanny 'Blood,' her biographer asserts, 'with a passion whose depth 'is beyond the comprehension of ordinary mortals.'* Godwin, however, intimates that the illusions of that passion were dispelled by time, and that the object of Mary's devotion with her culture, amiability, and romantic affection proved herself 'a 'woman of timid and irresolute nature accustomed to yield to 'difficulties, and probably priding herself in the morbid softness 'of her temper.' The younger Wollstonecrafts were of no more heroic mould. Eliza, the youngest, had succumbed to the tragedy of her marriage to a husband depicted by Mary, with conviction if with exaggeration, as the typical brutal sensualist in his relations with his wife. A period of mental derangement had followed the birth of Eliza's first child. Mary (1784), summoned to attend the mother, took upon herself with characteristic determination to break a bond made intolerable by the husband's misconduct. 'One day Bishop (the husband) well 'out of the way, the sisters left his house for ever. . . . There 'was a mad, breathless drive, Bess, with her insanity half 'returned, biting her wedding-ring to pieces . . . a hurried 'exchange of coaches . . . . a giving of false names . . .' a retreat to a hidden lodging. Having triumphantly removed the ill-used wife from husband, home, and from her new-born and 'tenderly loved' baby, Mary indited her account of the proceedings from the house where Eliza lay concealed in hourly dread of detection. Mary's sympathy was intense, she felt acutely the miseries of her sister's plight, but the arbiter of Eliza's destiny tells the story of rescue with the true ring of the lover of adventure, and the whole tenor of the correspondence chronicling the episode is fraught with an ever-present sense of the dramatic and romantic interest of the perils encountered. 'All this'—the letter was addressed to the third sister—'may 'serve to talk about and laugh at when we meet.'

An autocratic guardian, she faced with admirable courage the struggle for life ensuing. She accepted her responsibilities as bravely as she rashly incurred them, and when a year later (1785) Fanny—Mary had dictated her marriage to a long vacillating lover—lay dying at Lisbon she set forth penniless to

* 'Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin,' by E. R. Pennell. Eminent Women Series. Allen and Co. 1885.

a strange country to nurse the friend upon whom she had lavished the emotions of her youth.

A period followed Fanny's death of extreme discouragement. Overwhelmed by sorrow, harassed by debts, encumbered by cares for the welfare of the idle, incapable, often disreputable persons who leant upon her aid, Mary passed through one of the dreariest stages of her history. School-keeping had become unremunerative, morally it had become intolerable. The offer of a post as governess to Lord Kingsborough's * daughters opportunely presented itself. Mary accepted (1787) the new experiment, with its promise of change, variety of associates, and the prospect of travel. It was not an altogether successful venture. Hitherto Mary had been, in whatsoever circumstances placed, the directing spirit. In the Irish household at Mitchelstown Castle she was, though she admits that her pupils, their mother and the guests who frequented the house, were kindly disposed towards the stranger, a person of no account. Her letters, where in her own imagination she figured as the virtuous heroine of contemporary fiction, betray a naïve misappreciation of the situation. The castle, with its great gates, inspired her with the feeling of a prisoner entering the Bastille. Lady Kingsborough is 'a fine lady without fancy or sensibility,' and Mary 'can thank God she was not so unfortunate as to be born 'a lady of quality.' The lady of quality, nevertheless, drew her solitary governess, so far as Mary would respond to her advances, into the frivolities of the not over-intelligent social resorts of Dublin, Bristol, and Bath, and though Mary's letters speak of 'the dissipated life' led by the rich and noble, her railings were the result of the morbid condition of overwrought nerves and of that exaggerated conception of the differences class distinctions involve, more common amongst persons who view such distinctions from below than amongst those to whom they represent merely the course of conventional routine. It may further be questioned whether in the matter of morals her new associates contrasted unfavourably with her old. Her lot—Southey wrote to Miss Bowles—'had fallen on evil days, 'and the men to whom she attached herself were utterly un-

* Afterwards Lord Kingston. The Lord Kingston of 1798 was celebrated as the avenger of his daughter's elopement with Fitz-Gerald. The account of his trial and acquittal for the murder of her lover is told dramatically in the 'Recollections of Aubrey de Vere' (Arnold, 1897). It illustrates the manners and morals of eighteenth-century Ireland. Margaret King, Mary's favourite pupil, became Godwin's 'democratic countess' Lady Mountcashell, who, later, was known as the Mrs. Mason of the 'Shelley Journals.'

'worthy of her. . . . It is hardly possible for anyone to con-'ceive what those times were who has not lived in them.' The consideration must be kept in view when, generalising from personal experience, she constitutes herself judge and censor of the world at large.

The Kingsborough engagement terminated 1788. Returning to London, Mary inaugurated a new departure under the auspices of her most faithful friend, Mr. Johnson, the principal publisher and bookseller of the day. 'I am going to be the first of a new genus,' so she announced her adoption of a professional literary career. The active part she had taken in the drama of reality had in no-wise exhausted her innate predilection for novel experiments. She had nourished her emotional faculties and indulged her romantic proclivities first in the sentimentalism, later in melancholy retrospects, of her friendship with Fanny Blood;* she had fostered her intellect in the hothouse of her imagination. About to enter a new phase (1788), she began her labours under a veil of mystery, 'employing some precaution' to conceal her authorship and begging her sister not to mention her place of abode or manner of life. In her lodgings—George Street, Blackfriars—she served her apprenticeship as reader, critic, translator. Her 'Answer to Burke' attracted considerable attention, but the 'Vindication' (1792) remains the high-water mark of her fame. To-day the greater part of the treatise possesses little but historical value. The solidarity of human interests, masculine and feminine, being not an abstract hypothesis but a fundamental law of human developement, the natural processes of advancing civilisation have effected the revolution in women's standing to which the 'Vindication' incites. Educational facilities have been liberally accorded, the necessity of hygienic physical training contended for has been recognised. The tendency in every department of social life has been to revise laws of sex-exclusion and—wherever her sex is not reasonably prohibitive—to extend the fields open to women of lucrative employment. With facilities for earning financial independence the temptation to secure maintenance by loveless marriages, or a precarious livelihood by

* 'Mary, a Fiction,' 1788, was the memorial of her friendship. Mr. E. V. Lucas, editing her 'Original Stories' (Frowde, 1906), erroneously refers to the 'Wrongs of Woman' as her 'one experiment in adult fiction.' He also strangely expresses his 'doubts if the production of a book for children would ever have occurred spontaneously to an author so much more interested in the status of woman and other adult matters.' Children and their education were Mary's hobby, in her capacity as schoolmistress, governess and mother.

non-legalised connections (vitiating the sense of mutual obligations), has been diminished. And although, involved in the tangle of complicated economic problems, the status of the woman-industrial still demands readjustment, the working woman protected by the Married Woman's Property Act of 1882, stands on a wholly different footing from her unprotected sisters of 1792.

Beneath, however, the cry for legal redress and the attack upon eighteenth-century conditions of society, a permanent psychological interest belongs to the main theory upon which Mary bases what is, for the most part, an urgent plea for educational reform.* The root of wrong, the 'Vindication' contended, lay in a defective cultivation of reason and an over-stimulus of the emotions ('sensibility') and the senses.† 'In tracing the 'causes that have degraded woman—to me it appears that they 'all spring from the want of understanding. Whether this 'arises from a physical or accidental weakness of faculties time 'alone can determine.' On this theme she dwells, to it she recurs. Nor, looking back to the eighteenth-century world of emotion, bemired by gross sensual indulgence, is it any wonder to see a woman of higher aspiration seeking in the kingdom of intellect the purer air mediævalism sought in the kingdom of the soul. Sentence after sentence proclaims her doctrine of regeneration. 'Were women more rationally educated they 'would be content to love but once in their lives.' Their choice of a lover would preclude disappointment, they would eschew the 'rake,' who works only upon their 'sensibility,' and elect the reasonable man of modest merit. 'In the choice of a husband 'they would not be led astray by the qualities of a lover. From 'reasoning as well as feeling—the only province of woman at 'present'—all good would flow: virtue, purity, modesty, strength, dignity. And at last, the task of life fulfilled, the ideal woman '(as I sincerely wish them to be in some future 'revelation of time) will calmly wait for the sleep of death and, 'rising from the grave, may say—Behold thou gavest me a 'talent—and here are five talents.'

Language if it expresses also moulds thought. The style of a given epoch reacts upon the thinker to whom it has become, however artificial, the natural medium of utterance. The

* 'She was a born educator, the "Vindication" is in reality an elaborate treatise on education.' E. R. Clough.

† The Dictionary of National Biography speaks misleadingly of Mary as a disciple of Rousseau, whose opinions with regard to women the 'Vindication' assails.

'Vindication' reflects the style of the eighteenth century in its pedantry, didactic formality, stilted rhetoric. The thoughts are to some extent in accordance with the diction. But no one can read its pages without conviction of the sincerity of Mary's chivalrous devotion to the cause of a noble, if erroneous idealism. She strove, as Hannah More, as Elizabeth Fry, as all the pioneers of a new humanistic creed, to do her part diligently in lifting the fallen flag of pity, charity, and purity from the dust. She strove, not unfaithfully, to be the evangelist of an intellectual ideal. And if she mistook reason for the sword of Michael, and with it assailed a foe against whose panoply reason strikes in vain, the wider knowledge she was about—at so great a price—to gain of woman's nature in the schoolroom of passion was, perhaps, the one thing needful to mellow her character, modify the crudity of her judgements, and illuminate her championship. No one, further, can peruse the sentences that treat of human love: 'Love will reign, like some other stalking mischiefs' by its own usurpation; 'To speak disrespectfully of love is . . . 'high treason against sentiment and fine feelings; but I wish 'to speak the simple language of truth'—without appreciation of the melancholy irony of the words when viewed in relation to the subsequent events of Mary's own love-tragedy, to which the 'Vindication' serves as an incongruous overture. Hers are the precepts and assumptions, presumptuous as ignorance alone can be, of a woman whose self-knowledge is an intellectual acquisition; whose ripe brain was still mated with an immature heart.

Nor was her intellect of an order to balance passion: 'The 'strength of her mind,' was Godwin's judicial estimate, 'lay in 'intuition. Her religion, her philosophy . . . were the pure 'result of feeling and taste. She adopted one opinion and 'rejected another spontaneously by a sort of tact and the force 'of a cultivated imagination. . . .' To such a temperament, self-confident, clean-handed and charged with unawakened passion, it was a condition fraught with peril.

Thirty-two years had passed over her head. She had transformed the conditions of her life. The sufficiency of her professional resources had removed the stress of poverty; her position as a thinker and author was assured. She had called herself the 'first of a new genus,' but she did not stand alone. Her steadfast friends, Mary Hayes, 'professing Mary Wollstone-'craft's opinions with more zeal than discretion,' * and Mrs. Fen-

* H. Crabb Robinson, 'Reminiscences,' 1869.

wick, were both novelists.* The names of Mrs. Trimmer, Mrs. Barbauld, Mrs. Inchbald, Mrs. Macaulay, are still remembered. With beautiful Amelia Alderson (Mrs. Opie), ' whose conversion ' to Quakerism gave her a sort of *éclat*,' † with William Blake (whose illustrations to Mary's ' Original Stories ' ‡ give the work its only present value), and more especially with Fuseli, whose ' vigorous impotence ' was defined by Coleridge, Mary's talents, charm and conversational fluency won her a constant welcome amongst the groups of celebrities who frequented Mr. Johnson's open house.

Definable changes foreshadowed the impending spiritual avalanche. The Swiss artist—Rousseau's disciple—Fuseli, became a dominating influence. Priding himself upon candid confession of his friend's faults, he had denominated Mary ' a ' philosophic sloven.' The reproach appears to have taken effect. Departing from the simplicity necessity had once enforced, Mary, exchanging her Blackfriars lodgings for a house in Store Street, modified the bare orderliness of her surroundings ; she discarded the ' beavour hat and coarse woollen gown— ' of the kind milkwomen wear.' ' Mary is growing quite hand- ' some,' her sister wrote of the brown-eyed, broad-browed woman, with massed swathes of red-brown hair, whom Opie painted, winning rather than beautiful, Celtic in type, with something of passion in the grave sadness, a face whose charm would always lie in shadows and lights of shifting moods.

The incident of the first awakening of dormant instincts in Mary's sentiment for Fuseli is related circumstantially by Godwin ; recorded with, probably, unveracious additions in the life of the artist ; § denied by Mr. Kegan Paul ; reaffirmed by the accomplished German writer, Fräulein Helen Richter.‖ It was, in the main outline, it may be believed, authentic. Fuseli—then at the zenith of his London fame—had had more than one love story, and his temperament may have presented novel attractions to Mary. ' He amused and delighted her—the delight ' she enjoyed in his society she transferred to his person.' ¶ Fuseli, however, had a wife, and although Fräulein Richter opines this consideration would have had ' kleine Geltung ' for

* ' The Memoirs of Emma Courtney : A Novel,' by M. Hayes. 1773. ' Secrecy,' by Mrs. Fenwick.

† Crabb Robinson.

‡ ' Original Stories ' adapted to regulate and form the mind for goodness and truth, with six plates engraved by William Blake. 1788.

§ ' Life of Fuseli,' by Knowles.

‖ ' Mary Wollstonecraft,' von Helen Richter. Wien. 1897.

¶ Godwin. Memoirs.

Mary, Godwin avers that Mary 'conceived it both practicable and 'eligible to cultivate a distinguishing affection for him and to 'foster it by the endearments of personal intercourse and a 'reciprocation of kindness without departing from the rules 'she had prescribed to herself.' Like many another woman she fell a victim to her clear conscience and upright intention. Fuseli's sentiments seem to have been mixed. Her inveterate sincerity of speech was not calculated to inspire permanent devotion on the part of the flattered artist. Admiration, with her, dictated no economy of truth: 'I hate to see that reptile Vanity 'sliming over the noble qualities of your heart,' she wrote, although she 'could not live without seeing him daily.'

Misconstruing the very essence of womanhood she attempted fearlessly to 'live her language'—the language of the 'Vindication'; to translate theory into practice and to illustrate in her own self-mastery: 'she scorned to suppose she could feel a 'struggle in conforming to those laws she had laid down,' the supremacy of reason over emotional impulse. When emotion transgressed its bounds she suffered acutely, even her intellectual occupations were suspended. A break was inevitable. She was thirty-three; her youth was lost; she had reached a crisis where neither interests, pleasures, least of all Platonic companionships availed to fill the blank of the 'bonheur manqué.' 'She felt 'herself alone'—the words prelude many a disastrous episode in a woman's career. Some women bear passively the certitude that they have missed the fruition of womanhood. Others turn with all the force of baffled instincts to new adventure, active or emotional, with which to fill the vacancy of an unmated life. Mary fled from London, from Fuseli and from—one may believe—herself. In December 1792 she left England for Paris.

Paris was in a ferment. The September massacres were still in men's minds, and the tocsin of that new Sicilian Vespers still resounded in men's ears. Europe stood aghast. The witches' sabbath of horror, its phantasmagoria of frenzied cruelty; the Hundred Hours' agony when the human beast was at large and the keepers lashed its madness was a living nightmare. Within the walls of the Convention chaos surged, on the pavements outrage, bread-riots, hate-riots, cries of famished women, sanguinary clamours of the Tricoteuses. Heroism stood royally on high; Danton, Marat, Robespierre, sinister apostles of the new creed, animated their fellows; freedom was submerged in blood, and the standards of great ideals trailed in the red gutters of the streets.

The trial of the King was proceeding when Mary took up her solitary abode in the house of an absent acquaintance; from

the window she watched, not without tears, despite her republican prepossessions, Louis drive by on Wednesday, December 26, to appear before his judges at the hall, where 'the Ushers had become as box-openers at the Opera.' If Mary desired sensations they were to her hand.

Associating with the democrats who gathered round Thomas Paine in the rue de Richelieu, or issuing forth from her retreat at Neuilly, she became the spectator of scenes which might have blotted out for ever all other thoughts, and satisfied every craving of body and soul for excitement. But while the seething flood of public events may rise, sweeping before it the wrecked hopes of generations, the life of the individual is still its own centre, and in the circumference of her personal fortunes, Mary, humanist as she was, pursued her private path in love's great experiment.

During April, May, June and July, the clash of parties raised a new Bedlam of rival furies. Men's lives shivered on cobweb threads; plots and counter-plots kept panic alive. Drums beat in Paris as the death-watch ticks in the silent room. Beautiful Théroigne was driven mad by insult; Madame Roland lay in the Abbaye prison as Marie Antoinette in the Conciergerie. The death tumbrel rumbled nightly through the streets. In the clumsy diligence on a Thursday of July Charlotte Corday crossed the Neuilly bridge. On Saturday, Marat rendered his long account. On Wednesday, in the red smock of the condemned, Charlotte, bound on a cart, went calmly to her death. And during those months Mary lived her brief romance of joy and passion. Her Letters give, in brief reminiscent touches, hints of the great unquestioning happiness that for her heart of a woman filled those weeks with radiance as passion repaid in full its long arrears of youth's abstinence. 'Bring me then back your barrier face,' she writes twice over in days when that face wore another, 'commercial,' aspect. Bring back those eyes, those lips—her 'face burns' as she recalls the trysting-place where the woman who had never loved before learnt her new alphabet of life and the world was forgotten as they two met. Forgotten all the calm wisdom of blind reason: 'Let love to man be only part of that 'glowing flame of universal love, which, after encircling 'humanity, mounts in grateful incense to God.'* Forgotten that immense compassion for humankind, its sufferings and its crimes: 'Pity,' she had written, 'is one of my prevailing passions.'

The novel,† begun when of all her joy not even the ashes remained, places her two lovers amid all the horrors

* Vindication.

† The Wrongs of Woman, posthumously published.

of a madhouse. In that 'tomb of living death—when the 'cries of maniacs made them pause in their joy—(finding 'so much of heaven that paradise bloomed around them) '—they marvelled that they felt so happy.' Was she telling in parable of the time when, with blood fresh on the pavements, she trod the Paris streets, environed by infamies worse than those of any madhouse imagination could paint; when in spring she waited at the barrier with 'her basket of 'grapes upon her arm'; when in harvest-time she sat by the window at Neuilly, her lover at her side, 'regarding the waving 'corn' in the first glad days of union?

So, in the finding of herself, perished Mary's wisdom.

Biographers have been at needless pains to write an apology for her connection with Imlay. Her creed, and it was no lax one, recognised the tie as a moral bond. She stood to him, by his express acknowledgement—as afterwards to Godwin before the philosopher regularised their union—in the relation of wife to husband. Nor would the sequel have proved less deplorable had legal obligations riveted the tie between Mary, whose nature was as upright as it was impassioned, and the American who, in spite of his literary ambitions,* was of alien tastes, ruled alternately by his senses and the desire for gain, with the habits of what her writings denounced as a 'man of pleasure,' incapable of responding to the intensity of her love or of fulfilling the ideal her imagination had created of the father of her child.

Her late springtime of happiness was short-lived. No documents record more tragically the dying of hope than do the letters Mary addressed to her lover from Paris, from Havre, and from Paris again, 1794, while he was resident in London, whither, the presentiment of forsaking upon her, she followed him in April 1795. There, finding life less supportable than the leaving of it, she purposed suicide, deterred only, it appears, by his remonstrances. Agreeing to live, she betook herself to Norway and Sweden as Imlay's authorised representative: 'Mrs. Imlay—my best friend and wife,' where she conducted commercial negotiations, with perhaps something of the old love of adventure, and wrote a book of travels.† Her private letters henceforward are those of a gambler who has staked all on the game life plays with loaded dice, and who has lost. In them her child is her sole pretext for the maintenance of a joint house-

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* 'Imlay eine dreibandige Novelle: "Die Auswanderer" veröffentlichte.' H. Richter.

† Letters written during a short residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. London. 1796.

hold. Imlay admitted the plea, and the attempt was made, with disastrous results. A second resolve at suicide was carried out in November. Rescued from the river, Mary accepted at length the finality of defeat. She had sought love, she had sought death; both escaped her grasp. After her three years' experience of the greatest illusion and the greatest reality human nature can confront, she resigned herself with courage to face the inevitable.

The story of the remaining eighteen months is of the calm which succeeds the storm. In the January of 1796 (Imlay's affections were already wholly estranged) Mary's acquaintance with Godwin had ripened into friendship; the friendship reconciled her to life. Her last interview with Imlay was in March. By August her relations with 'friend Godwin' had changed, and on March 29, 1797, Godwin waived his philosophic scruples, and his marriage with the woman generally regarded, in spite of her frank admission of legal irregularity, as Imlay's deserted wife, was, to the scandal of Mrs. Inchbald and others, formally celebrated at Old St. Pancras Church. Godwin, in his diary, omits mention of the ceremony.

'I found a wounded heart,' Godwin wrote, 'and as that 'heart cast itself on me it was my ambition to heal it'; the statement has the accent of veracity. For Mary from Imlay to Godwin was an abrupt transition; how it would have fared with her had the years of their wedded life been prolonged, who shall say; but fresh from her bitter lesson she sheltered her broken hopes with the promised haven of intellectual companionship and rational affection. 'The partiality we con-'ceived for each other,' Godwin records the sequence of intimacy, 'was in that mode, which I have always regarded as 'the purest and most refined style of love. It grew with equal 'advances in the mind of each. When, in the course of things, 'the disclosure came there was nothing, in a manner, for either 'party to disclose. It was friendship melting into love. . . . I,' he adds, 'had never loved till now.'

At the time of his marriage Godwin was the pontiff of the advanced school of contemporary thinkers; his reputation was established as the passionless puritan of philosophy, the high priest of freedom, justice, and duty. He had gained a curious ascendency over younger men, scholars and students, who deferred to his opinions and often invited his counsel. Dated a year after Mary's death there is a letter extant * which illustrates

* Partly quoted in the 'Life and Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley,' by Mrs. J. Marshall. Bentley. 1889.

the position then held by the author of 'Political Justice.' George Taylor, father of the poet who in the next generation appears as the friend of Caroline Norton, had ridden from County Durham to London on Meggy, his mare, to sit face to face with Mary's bereaved husband. He records in an epistolary journal addressed to his wife his impressions by the way of cattle and crops, turnip and bean fields, here of good husbandry, there of 'a farmer's Hell, good Lord deliver 'us!' Of the hills, too, where the boy Newton tended sheep, and of Trinity Chapel, where that boy's statue 'stands, the 'admiration, almost the worship of the world.' Until Meggy trotted into London, and failing the Holborn hostelry of the Queen's Head, went 'hunting the Blue Boar till we caught 'him.' Two long interviews with Godwin rewarded the pilgrim. 'Again with Godwin,' two hours alone of free discussion and warm debate with the host whose 'chilling manner' is attributed to his Calvinistic education and want of social conversancy. Then there was a meeting where 'little Mary stretched out her 'arms' to the young guest, who likewise noted the poor 'sulky-'looking' Fanny Imlay at play kindly with her one-year old half-sister; noted, too, the children's scant attire—'only two 'garments, a frock and a chemise.' His wife's letters reflect the same devotion: 'Fenwick,' she writes, 'has been reading 'Mary's letters to Imlay, and he says if he had a hundred 'and fifty wives and were in love with a hundred and fifty 'more, he must still be in love with her.' . . . 'If you do not 'remember every word you hear Godwin utter, woe to you.'

Nor was Godwin's renown confined to a literary and philosophic circle. Practical politicians courted his adherence. Richard Sheridan in 1785 had made advances on behalf of Charles Fox. The theorist, 'in principle a Republican, in practice 'a Whig' (as thirty years later he defined his creed to Lady Caroline Lamb), did not possess the pliancy requisite for political utility. He retained his independence of the Whig party, taking his honours—as he took all else—seriously. Yet it is difficult to believe that Mary, whose keen perceptions were always alive to the defects of her friends, was prompted by the glamour of popular fame in estimating her new chances of happiness. But, so far as in him lay, so far as Godwin could love, he loved her, and Mary, in her respite from misery, with her reviving energies, her generous sympathies, her quick smile, changing moods and eager loyalty to bygone ideals, was—at thirty-seven—growing young. Her charm, 'whenever she 'appeared admiration attended upon her,' had the rare grace of 'a consciousness of enjoyment that seemed ambitious that

'everyone should be happy as well as herself.' And although Godwin was well aware of her weaknesses, her impressionability, impatient temper, moods of causeless dejection, her exaggeration—eminently distasteful to him—in both censure and praise, he had fallen under the spell of a nature at all points the antithesis of his own.

Other men of note rendered her equal homage: 'As for 'panegyric I never praised living being yet except Mary Woll-'stonecraft.* She I perceive still clings to France,' so Southey attested her fidelity to old allegiances, 'but France has played the 'traitor to liberty. I stand where I stood, looking at the rising 'sun, and now the sun has set behind me.' Nor in her personal faiths did she suffer any man to cast a stone at her fallen idol. 'She never spoke bitterly of Imlay and allowed none to do so in her presence.'†

At first the alienation of friends, consequent on her marriage, occasioned her some perturbed surprise. Soon, however, 'as a worshipper of domestic life,' she contented herself with the measure of isolation entailed, her serenity unimpaired by the insolence of a Mrs. Inchbald or the social subjection of a Mrs. Siddons. It was enough that she had brought sunlight into Godwin's grey egoism: 'You cannot imagine how happy your 'letter made me,' he told her shortly after their marriage. 'No 'creature expresses, because no creature feels, so perfectly as 'you do, and after all one's philosophy, it must be confessed, 'that there is someone that takes an interest in one's existence 'is extremely gratifying——'

'Now I have ventured on you I should not like to lose you,' Mary wrote in June 1797. The anticipated birth of her child was at hand. Always subject to fits of restless melancholy, shadows come and go, chequering her content; sometimes she is angry at her husband's invulnerable egoism, later she makes peace. She loves him: 'in proportion as I am in good heart.' Then August had come, and on the 30th 'little Mary' was born. Days of suspense followed. In Godwin's diary and in the Memoirs the picture is drawn by his faithful and accurate hand. His philosophic calm is shaken, but the contrast of those two natures of husband and wife stands out in relief. Patient, courageous, affectionate, her will, despite all physical weakness and suffering, is active as ever. 'I should have died, but was 'determined not,' she tells Godwin after an access of acute agony. The hours are entered one by one. When recovery seemed assured Godwin went once more about his business. The day

* Southey also wrote a sonnet to her. † Godwin, 'Memoirs.'

'that finally decided the fate of the object dearest to my heart 'that the universe contained' he spent visiting his friends. Another crisis alarmed him, and Godwin, abandoning his occupations, instals himself, with aid of friends and servant and doctors, as his dying wife's—most incompetent—nurse.

Four friends: 'Mary was almost idolised,' 'sat up nearly the 'whole of the last week of her existence,' to go and come at bidding. Miss Hayes, her constant disciple, and another woman friend watched incessantly beside her. Very true to herself in dying, as in living, are Mary's few recorded words. Godwin's clumsy attempts to hide his knowledge of her approaching death, while he attempted to learn what would be her last wishes were she aware of her condition, were answered, probably with one of her frequent smiles: 'I know 'what you are thinking of!' And when, an anodyne having given temporary relief, she cried, 'Oh, Godwin, I am in heaven,' his reply with the ingrained, pedantic precision, 'You mean, 'my dear, that your physical sensations are somewhat easier,' might even then have stirred her quick sense of amusement.

On September 10, after ten days of fluctuating hopes and fears, Mary died, leaving to the care of the philosopher Fanny Imlay, aged three and a half years, and the new-born baby, Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin.

II.

Mary Wollstonecraft belonged to a transition period. With the dawn of a new century processes unnoticeable to contemporary eyes become, in retrospect, plainly decipherable. No change is more marked than the change from an indifferent if not callous acceptation of the ills suffered by the weak, the unprotected and the poor, to the new humanist standpoint, adopted by philanthropists, moralists, and politicians, where every man is regarded as, in truth, his brother's keeper. The movement was one in which the 'superfluous woman' played an important part. In other ages she had found an asylum in religion, had suppressed austerely, or in erotic devotions deflected, her emotional instincts, or, again, in active conventual life had dedicated her affections and energies to the service of mankind. Now 'a characteristic of English life in the closing years of 'the (eighteenth) century was the increasing number of persons, 'especially unmarried women, who were making works of charity 'the main business of their lives.' * Hannah More and Eliza-

* 'History of England in the Eighteenth Century,' by W. E. H. Lecky, 1887, vol. vi.

beth Fry head the calendar of those who first set their hand to the wheel and whose labours of pity opened the road to the army of their successors, volunteers of mercy, who in hospitals, factories, prisons, and innumerable anonymous acts of charity have emulated the ideals of a St. Vincent de Paul.

The roll-call of women authors likewise was steadily increasing. Notorious for impropriety, the fictions of Aphra Behn ['Oronooko'] and of Mrs. Manley* ['New Atlantis'] had given place to the 'romans de mœurs' of Miss Burney and Maria Edgeworth, which anticipated the future triumphs of Miss Austen and George Eliot. Nor were attempts at self-culture confined to the educated middle class. The Blue Stocking Clubs of 1781 ' were signs of the desire ' of ladies of fashion to give a more serious character to female ' society,' while at the commencement of the new century one thousand circulating libraries demonstrated the extension of literary culture throughout the country. And by the early decades of the nineteenth century literature and philanthropy were established as two departments of active communal life where women could employ unchecked either their intellectual talents or their moral energies.

This was not all. In regions, other than those under the immediate tuition of reforming educationalists, women of eminence became recognised factors in determining, by purely social methods, the drift of public affairs. It was in this sphere that, born fifty years later than Mary Wollstonecraft, it was given to an advocate whom Mary, probably with some arrogant scorn, would have denominated ' a lady of quality,' to plead with success for the readjustment of those marriage rights, as for the redress of other legal wrongs, against which Mary had protested both in her polemical and romantic writings.

Caroline Sheridan, granddaughter of Godwin's old friend, Richard Sheridan, playwright, orator, and statesman, was born in 1808.† The old order changes, but in the new individual lives, persistent if fragile links, witness to the continuity of personal influences, and affinities of past generations reassert themselves in the generations that succeed. Moreover, the

* Mr. Forsyth's ' Eighteenth Century Fiction ' contains a curious oversight. The specimen of Mrs. Manley's fiction cited, ' The Fair Hypocrite,' appears to be merely a version of Bandello's ' Amore di don Giovanni di Mendozza,' Novella xliv, Seconda Parte. Equally of Italian descent are the Shakespeare girl-heroines cited by M. Staars as illustrating the English girl of Shakespeare's period.

† Two other earlier dates are given, but her biographer adheres to this as probably correct.

London of those times offered facilities, the immense extension of modern London precludes, for the interweaving of social relationships and the perpetuation of even slight acquaintanceships.

The year of Caroline's birth found Godwin domiciled in the home which had been Mary's with his second wife, Mrs. Clairmont. There poor peace-making Fanny Imlay was passing from girlhood to womanhood; there 'little Mary,' Mrs. Norton's friend and correspondent in days to come, was emerging from childhood. And, third of the trio, Jane Clairmont, Godwin's dark, olive-skinned stepdaughter, had been brought with her wildfire temperament under the reign of the luckless Godwin traditions of irregular connexions. It was a household ill-ruled and doomed to disruption. Mary Wollstonecraft's life was re-echoed in the lives of her two daughters. While Caroline Sheridan, the black-eyed child whom, at the age of three, her grandfather 'would not have liked 'to meet in a dark wood,' was still playing in the Scotch nursery of her mother's old home, seventeen-year-old Mary, her faith in the rectitude of her act as unquestioning as was her mother's when she accepted Imlay's love, fled with post-horses to Dover and in a small open boat to Calais, in the company of her poet-lover on July 28, 1813. Four years later, Fanny, heir to her mother's morbid moods of melancholy, without her saving grace of buoyant courage, in some access of solitary despair put an end, in her own words, 'to the existence of a being whose 'birth was unfortunate,' and was discovered in the chamber of a Swansea inn, her long brown hair about her face, a bottle of laudanum upon the table.* Jane Clairmont had encountered a worse fate. Byron, like a malignant genius, pervades the annals of that decade; the trace of his passing remained as a canker in the hearts of the women who had given him their love. Jane had become his mistress, expiating her folly in a lifetime of resentful misery.

The same year, 1816, Richard Sheridan, in the mournful decline of his genius and character, finished his long career, leaving behind him a record of noble causes sedulously championed;† William Lamb, afterwards Lord Melbourne, who had first purposed to write his biography, was among the

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* 'Life of P. B. Shelley,' by Prof. Dowden. Kegan Paul, Trench and Co. 1886.

† Miss Perkins' statement that he died 'deeply in debt' does not tally with Lord Dufferin's: 'his debts were found to amount to a comparative trifling sum.'

London notabilities who accompanied the funeral *cortège* of the dead orator, while we are told of William Godwin that 'day after day which succeeded the funeral saw him standing by Sheridan's grave.' * The death of Caroline's father followed close upon her grandfather's, and the widow, with her seven children, was installed in the home provided in Hampton Court Palace. There Caroline, whose lot as an agent in the work of reform comes as one of those surprises fate springs unawares upon men, passed her childhood in the schoolroom where the brilliant little group of Sheridan's grandchildren play-acted, sang, scribbled, improvised, drew and painted, each according to her or his bent, merry, affectionate, light-hearted, with an adoring mother, keen Irish wits, high spirits, physical beauty and health; their minds cultivated by as much formal instruction as Mrs. Sheridan's limited resources, and perhaps also her limited conception of the necessities of advanced learning for her girls, permitted.

Meanwhile Lady Caroline Lamb, the wife of Lord Melbourne's youth, versatile, unstable, talented, like a delicately tinted butterfly smitten with madness, had surrendered herself to all the caprices, loves, and hates of her passion for Byron, who in April 1816 looked his last on England,† commemorating in the stanzas 'Farewell, if ever fondest prayer,' his transitory attachment ‡ to one of the first women who, in the world of London society, had paid his poetic genius the homage by which it was so soon surrounded.

As earlier, 'a kind of Ophelia,' she had poured her grief into the ear of the old wit of bitter tongue and kind deeds, Byron's constant friend, Samuel Rogers,§ as in her novel 'Glenarvon' she had appealed to the sympathy of the world at large, so in process of time Godwin became the confidant of Lady Caroline's passion. Political events, marching as ever with their train of private consequences, had drawn the little vain, glittering, pathetic 'lady of fashion' into communication with the sedate philosopher. The Westminster election of 1818 was in prospect, and Lady Caroline on behalf of the Whig party presented 'her 'compliments to Mr. Godwin and fears his politics will incline 'him to refuse her request' of his interest; 'she hopes, 'however, she will not offend if she solicits it.'

* Kegan Paul, vol. ii.

† He joined the Shelleys, who, with Jane Clairmont, were in Switzerland.

‡ Rogers maintained that Lady Caroline had never become Byron's mistress.

§ Rogers and his Contemporaries. Claydon. 1889.

Godwin declined to take active part in the struggle, 'is too old to alter his course even at the flattering invitation of Lady 'Caroline,' but, the acquaintance thus inaugurated, the austere philosopher was not too old to serve as confessor to the remorseful, pitiful Will o' the Wisp to whom it was William Lamb's misfortune to be married. Nor, of the three women—Lady Caroline, Mrs. Norton, and the Queen—who stand pre-eminently important in the story of his life, is the crazy little figure of his wife the least interesting as a human personality. And it should be ever remembered in estimating the failings and faults of Mrs. Norton's future friend that his attitude towards the unprincipled, half sane, unhappy child-woman to whom he was bound, whose maturity but emphasised her follies, was mainly one of patient pity.

Her pathetic, self-conscious letters give just measure of her charm, grace, vanity, and light-minded irresponsibility. Byron was with the Guiccioli in Italy when Lady Caroline wrote from her country home, where she tells Godwin his room shall be always ready :

'I am like the wreck of a little boat, for I never come up to the sublime and beautiful—merely a gay, merry boat, which perhaps stranded itself at Vauxhall or London Bridge, or wounded without killing itself, as a butterfly does in a tallow candle. All I know is that I was happy, well, rich, joyful, and surrounded by friends. I have now one faithful, kind friend in William Lamb . . . but health, spirits, and all else is gone—gone how ? slowly, gradually, by my own fault.'

So she writes to Godwin, whose stepdaughter, discarded by Byron, was at that very time living at Pisa with the Shelleys, on intimate terms with Mary Wollstonecraft's old Mitchelstown pupil, Margaret King, now separated from her husband, Lord Mountcashel, and known by a pseudonym, borrowed from Mary Wollstonecraft's 'Original Stories,' as Mrs. Mason. Shelley's death (1822) broke up the group and brought his widow back to England. 'Pray tell me,' Lady Caroline asks (1823), 'is Mrs. 'Shelley your daughter ? They say she is very interesting, 'very beautiful, and returned from abroad.'

In April 1824 Byron too died. And while Caroline Sheridan, for reasons of discipline rather than for the acquisition of learning was submitting to the dubious benefits of boarding-school education at Wonersh (near the Grantley property), the shock of a chance encounter with her dead lover's funeral upon a country high road contributed to shatter finally Lady Caroline's excitable brain, and William Lamb at length sadly and unresentfully

quitted the wife with whom for half a lifetime he had borne and forborne so patiently.* She had made vain endeavours to retrieve the moral strength that long indulgence of intemperate emotions had fatally impaired. 'How strange it is I love Lord Byron so much now in my old age' (she was not yet forty), she writes in a dateless appeal for Godwin's help. Her good resolves are many. 'What is the use of anything here below, but to be 'enlightened and to try to make others happy? From this 'day I will endeavour to conquer all my violence, all my pas-'sions, but you are destined to be my master.' And this, although with a quick turn to mockery she confesses to disheartening doubts concerning the eternal question: what is the end? 'When we die, what difference between a black 'beetle and me?' she asks him. Doubts may have prevailed. Too late she strove importunately to win back what she had lost. Very full of pathos are the slight but polished verses in which she gives breath to her sadness:

> 'If thou couldst know what 'tis to weep,
> To weep unpitied and alone, . . .
> Thou wouldst not do what I have done.'

Melbourne made generous response to her penitence, and with her return to comparative sanity he did all that might be done to alleviate her distress. His letters during his Irish Chief Secretaryship are full of thought and affection for the desolate little life, a cockleshell of existence, floating softly away on to the great unknown sea.

And while he was at Dublin Castle, and while, with her mind wandering 'back to early days and love and faith,' Lady Caroline lay dying, Caroline Sheridan made her entrance (1826) into the London world. 'Coming down dressed to the room 'where her mother and aunt were, one observed to the other, '"Caroline looks well to-night"—her eyes, the speaker added, 'she had always said were fine.' 'I came out,' Mrs. Norton ended her recital, 'to find all London at my feet.' †

'All London,' and George Norton. She had made his acquaintance in her schooldays; according to his account he had waited three years to make her his wife. The marriage took place July 30, 1827.

The story of their unhappy married life needs no repetition. George Norton was an eighteenth-century survival, a representa-

* Torrens, 'Life of Lord Melbourne.'

† Quoted from 'Mrs. Norton and Her Writings,' by I. A. Taylor (Longman's Magazine).

tive in milder form of the husbands depicted in Mary Wollstonecraft's fictions; of average intelligence, average looks; necessitous, idle, overbearing, and weak, with a certain amount of selfish kindliness and affection, alternating with fits of unpardonable violence. But if in Norton the type survived, circumstance and surrounding had changed. Mrs. Norton was no eighteenth-century heroine to suffer meekly and in impotence the inequalities of justice when her emancipation from the obligations of a bond her husband had virtually ruptured, or when the custody of her children and her moral rights to their guardianship were in question. Her story from first to last is a clear demonstration of the new powers that had accrued to women. And when she published her famous pamphlets, it was 'not by angry wailing women, but by men, senators, and 'judges that the demand for the removal of legal injustices 'was urged.' 'The gentlemen of England—members of both 'Houses—have severally denounced in the most unmeasured 'terms the present laws for women,' she wrote, enumerating the names of those who had already openly declared the necessity of the reforms she advocated.

It would be impossible to conceive a figure with less resemblance to that of the professional agitator and feminine reformer than that of the woman who, above all others of her day, did most to effect the redressing of those wrongs of private life which laws can remedy, and to the minimising of those private sufferings which, if laws cannot heal, they can in part mitigate.

Caroline Norton was a woman of immense charm, extreme beauty, many talents and many failings. As a reformer two elements of personal character were the springs—rising to fever heat—of action. As Mary Wollstonecraft before her, she was possessed of strong emotional affections demanding reciprocity of devotion. Outraged, the current of feeling shifted its bed and demanded release from bonds and obligations such outrage had morally nullified. She was also possessed of an impassioned maternal instinct. This too outraged by a legalised separation from her children, she set herself with fearless chivalry, not unalloyed by the spirit of self-defence, to use her gifts, her personal and political influence to effect protective measures other women had advocated with equal zeal, but, through social circumstances, with less efficiency. 'I have learnt the law 'respecting women's sufferings piecemeal from every one of its 'defects,' she wrote in her letter to the Queen, a document of breathless vehemence combined with lucid and logical statement of undeniable facts; 'I believe I am permitted to be the 'example on which a particular law shall be reformed—[for]

'I combine with the fact of having suffered wrong the power to comment on and explain the cause.' It was no empty boast. 'The law of divorce will be much amended and she [Mrs. Norton] 'has greatly contributed to it,' Lord Brougham allowed in 1855. The amendments eventually added to the Bill were the result of suggestions drawn 'almost verbatim from her 'pamphlets, the Infant Custody Bill owing no less a debt to 'her championship.' *

She had started, with the unwisdom of her nineteen years, by the initial sin of (on her side) a loveless marriage; and in so far she had not only wronged her husband but had joined in fellowship with the mass of women who in greater or less degree have lowered marriage to the level of a mere social convention. Mary Wollstonecraft had followed love without law, Caroline Norton law without love, and by law she paid the penalty of her misdeed. She epitomised the situation, 'married 'unhappily I forgave and resented, resented and forgave. . . . 'I knew I was not faultless.' † What she forgave of mercenary squalor, of cruelty and infidelity is familiar to all. Her strange lapses into friendship, even into affection towards George Norton between quarrel and quarrel are less commonly known, and bear curious testimony to a certain lack of definite principle even in her wildest resentment of her husband's most manifest misconduct.

The sequence of events led by devious paths to disaster. A year after the Norton marriage Lady Caroline Lamb was dead. William Lamb, recalled to England on urgent public business, January 1828, arrived only a few days before the end. It is said that in later years 'Lady Holland was one of the few 'whom he allowed to speak of her who had been the most 'exquisite charm and keenest trial of his life.' 'He seldom 'spoke of her without implying that to the last she had more 'ascendency over him than any other human being.' † Meantime, some early experiences of George Norton's violences preceding the birth, Mrs. Norton's first son was born, and, amicable relations re-established, she found in literary employments, in absorbing devotion to her baby, as well as in the close companionship of the devoted Sheridan family group, distraction from private disillusions, while with her beauty and wit she

* It is noticeable that her share in the carrying of these reforms is ignored by the author, who chronicles the 'claims and conquests' of Englishwomen in respect of the marriage laws. See 'The Englishwoman,' chap. vi.

† Letter to the Queen. ‡ Torrens.

attained the position in social life she held, despite half-credited scandals, for the larger part of her London life.

William Lamb, now Lord Melbourne, was Home Secretary when Mrs. Norton addressed a letter to him on behalf of her husband (then seeking employment), and the friendship began which was to last until his death. He was over fifty, the friend of her father and grandfather; she was two-and-twenty—a thirty years disparity of age lay between them. Brilliant, intelligent, eager to acquire the scholarly culture, the ripe understanding of men and things, qualities which on Victoria's accession made his loyal service of priceless value to the seventeen-year-old queen, Mrs. Norton realised in the long hours of companionship he accorded to her the best gift the world had to offer. And no one who reads the documents open to all, his dying declaration, her passionate protestation after his death: 'I declare on the 'Holy Sacrament of God that I was not Lord Melbourne's 'mistress,' can doubt that their intercourse, through good report and through ill, enriched the lives of both.

George Norton was not remiss in taking advantage of the intimacy. For six years he sedulously encouraged it. 'When 'Lord Melbourne was with her [his wife] refusing admission 'to others . . .' when she visited Lord Melbourne at his own house, Norton would himself leave her at the door.

So the story proceeds until, a final quarrel dividing the ill-assorted couple, George Norton in his appeal for divorce, 1836, sued the Prime Minister as co-respondent.

Various reasons have been alleged for the prosecution. Rancour, money, political intrigue with intention—on the part of Norton's Tory advisers—to ruin the Whig leader. The circumstances of the trial are narrated by Mrs. Norton's biographer. In an earlier paragraph, abounding in inaccuracies, the author refers to Lord Melbourne as a man whose reputation with regard to women was not impeccable. The imputation was possibly well-deserved. She further cites, in support of the imputation, the Brandon case, omitting to state that in this instance the judge considered the evidence so valueless that 'he directed a rule to be entered for a non-suit,' and that subsequently, in the ecclesiastical court, Lord Brandon's counsel withdrew the case, the plaintiff paying costs.*

The issue of the Norton prosecution was a political event. Bystanders looked on: 'I [Charles Greville] said, would Mel-'bourne resign?' Wellington, with a soldier's frank disbelief in the sincerity of the professed standard of public morals,

* Torrens' 'Life.'

replied: 'O Lord, no! Resign! not a bit of it—it will all blow 'over and won't signify a straw.' As the trial proceeded the disclosures were not of Lord Melbourne's guilt, but of Norton's malice. 'The wonder is,' again Greville wrote, 'how with such 'a case Norton's family ventured into court.' General opinion tallied with the verdict. 'Melbourne had had more oppor-'tunities than any man ever had before, and had made no use 'of them,' was, after his kind, Lord Malmesbury's commentary on the acquittal.

Lord Melbourne was cleared; Mrs. Norton, according to the procedure of the time, had had no opportunity afforded her of self-defence. Moreover, she had yielded to his request 'that 'while he was Minister I would not publish my own account of 'the case.' Separated from her husband, refused access to her children, deprived of their guardianship in favour of the woman who had been the evil genius of her household, precluded from proving her innocence, she looked to her pen, 'as the soldier trusts to his sword,' to win for herself and others in like conditions at least the rights of motherhood. Her pamphlet, 'Separation of Mother and Child—the Law of 'Custody Considered' (1837) was the result. It was in the fitness of things that Mary Wollstonecraft's daughter was at this time Mrs. Norton's counsellor. 'It was a great triumph 'to me,' Mrs. Norton wrote, acknowledging Mary Shelley's criticisms, 'to see how alike what I had written and part of 'your letter was. . . . I improved the passage materially by your 'observation——' The acquaintance of the two, each intellectually so far above the average levels, was cemented into friendship as Mrs. Norton became the spokeswoman of rights the other mother had not less at heart. 'I intend, if possible '(and what is not possible in this world?) to have a discussion 'of the alteration of that law in Parliament this session,' Mrs. Norton announced to her correspondent. More than a discussion was achieved. The Bill passed the Commons May 1838, Disraeli voting in its favour. It was rejected by the Lords. Mrs. Norton's 'Plain Letter to the Lord Chancellor on 'the Law of Custody' was printed for distribution to members in December 1838. The Bill became law the following year.

There was a long interval before again, 1854, she lifted her voice in a second raid upon English laws for Englishwomen in the nineteenth century. The intervening period, with its eventful private chronicle of perpetual disputes, anxieties, literary labours, and successes,* of friendships and bitter

* The Dream and Other Poems, 1840. The Child of the Islands, 1845. Stuart of Dunleath, 1851, etc.

enmities, had been clouded by many losses: the death of her mother, of a brother and of the half-uncle, Charles Sheridan, with whom she had made her home. Left alone, 'married to a 'man's name, but never to know the protection of this nominal 'husband, nor the joys of family, nor the everyday companion-'ship of a real home—to be slandered, tormented, insulted, to 'find the world and the world's law utterly indifferent to her 'wrongs'—to be forbidden, on pain of worse calumny 'to show 'preference for any man, even a preference dictated by gratitude 'for generous pity that has lightened many dreary days,' such was the lot of Caroline Norton when at thirty-seven she took up her abode in Chesterfield Street, the most noted wit, as she had been the most noted beauty, of her world.

Lord Melbourne's death, 1848, broke another link with the past. His letters bear witness to what his loss meant to her. 'I venture to say that you have nothing to do but to express a 'wish and it shall be instantly complied with'—the phrase occurs in a letter of 1836. 'I miss you, I miss your society and con-'versation every day at the hours at which I was accustomed 'to enjoy them,' he wrote in the suspension of daily intercourse occasioned by the trial. It was further suspended by the Queen's accession. 'With Lord Melbourne,' Greville states, the seventeen-year-old Victoria 'passes more hours than any 'two people in any relation of life perhaps ever do pass together.' At that time Mrs. Norton was not received at Court, nor was it until the Minister was superseded in the singular office he filled with respect to the Queen—whose attachment to her first Minister was only equalled by his devotion to her service—that his companion of elder days was again called upon to fill the blanks in her old friend's life with her constant forethought and affection.

As the premature decline of strength clouded his once robust spirit it was a melancholy task. 'I saw Mrs. Norton one day 'when she had just been with Lord Melbourne,' Henry Taylor says, making note that Lord Melbourne had quoted in application to himself the 'Agonistes':

> 'So much I feel my genial spirits droop,
> My hopes all flat, Nature within me seems
> In all her functions weary of herself,
> My race of glory run, and race of shame,
> And I shall shortly be with those that rest.' *

* Torrens, citing the story as told by Greville, substitutes a 'not' for the 'and' in the fourth line. This was not so quoted by Mrs. Norton. MS. note to Torrens' 'Life.'

In May 1848 he gave his last vote—one in support of religious liberty. In November, summoned by her son Fletcher's illness to Lisbon, immersed in preparations for the journey, Mrs. Norton received the tidings of Lord Melbourne's death.

Undoubtedly it was to her position as Lord Melbourne's friend that she owed a large measure of her public influence. But other friendships there were which contributed largely to render her a power in the work of reform. They were not the friendships of the mere lion-hunter, nor of the woman who pays in flattery what she demands in attention. Men distinguished in all walks of life gathered by spontaneous instinct even in the waning of her beauty around a woman who was as ready to listen as to talk, and behind whose sharp tongue, versatile talents, biting wit and sensitive intelligence, they divined strong-hearted courage, eager sympathies, and generous purpose. Her friendship with Henry Taylor covered many years. Some amongst her letters to him may illustrate what manner of friendships were those she made—their vitality, warmth and sincerity; they interpret also to us of a later generation the personal charm which, if it did not always avail to win the causes she had at heart, at least won for them a ready hearing:

'Will you dine here on Sunday at half-past seven? I do not think I can "receive" again—I thought I was fond of my friends, but I find I am not. I feel very much worried when they are here, and very much out of spirits when they are gone. I wish to amuse myself and I cannot. I try to enjoy all the liberty of doing as I please, but it is of as much use to me as a kite to a child whose holiday is without a breeze to fly it. I wish it was all over and that people were discussing what I *was*. This is an invitation to dinner, so answer it.'

Again—on an August day in 1838—sent down to her waiting guest there is a gayer note:

'You must assiduously quote to yourself and answer yourself, contradict yourself and justify your own opinions to yourself for a little while, for the Devil of sitting up hath been very potent with me, and hath driven out the Angel of Early Rising, whose golden and sweet face is becoming, as it were, as the face of a friend forgotten.'

Undated comes a page written after some renewed cause of dejection:

'Thank you for your note. I am a good deal beat, and that is the fact, and the accident of writing when one is in a low mood to any one who is friendly towards me is apt to "hatch" the expression of sadness into life.'

And then her friend is about to marry:

'I hope you will be happy; there is no one I believe deserves happiness more, and I also hope when you have power over the destiny of another that you will remember that the most intelligent woman God ever made has something of the *child* in disposition, and that the indulgence shown to children is as necessary in their case (if you mean either to be happy) as with an infant of three years old. Do not laugh at me for lecturing my betters, it is only when I think of some fresh and uncommenced destiny that I look gravely and sadly back to all the mistakes of my own. And I am convinced that as we bring more courage to the endurance of the great than the lesser evils of our lives, so we grant more indulgence to the real and positive faults of our every-day companions than to their moods, their habits, their small waywardnesses, and the points where they neither fit our own dispositions nor our preconceived notions of what would suit or please us——'

Wiser words have rarely been addressed by any woman to any bridegroom; they are moreover the generous words of one who seeks out of her own failure to create for others success.

Other notes follow—some to 'the cheery Bird that sings' in her friend's cage. Gay, gentle, affectionate notes, with the graceful little drawings that show she too remembers, as an elder woman by many years of sorrow, that quality of perpetual childhood in her correspondent, and showing, too, that in the peaceful riverside home of her 'poet and philosopher' she was a solicited guest. 'You shall appoint another day,' she writes, when, other matters intervening, she had postponed a visit, 'If you could forgive, *without* forgetting me!—and I will 'more humbly consider it in the Medes and Persians style of invitation: unchangeable.'

A companion who could put aside her griefs and accept the compensations life offered for its great reverses, she could also, and it was a further claim to friendship, demand sympathy of a sort 'no one has a right to accept who cannot look to it as a 'source of comfort both to the giver and the receiver.'

'I send you a pamphlet,' * she writes in May 1854, 'against which I *know* all prejudice must be felt. Unless my life could present the same aspect to others that it does to *me*, unless an inspiration of knowledge could be given to them, of all that rests between me and Heaven, I do not expect indulgence. Nor do I expect my superstitious belief that I have suffered unfairly that I may exert myself to bring about change for others, to seem anything but a laughable, mad fancy, born of the overrating of individual power and individual

* English Laws for Women, 1854.

endurance. Such as it is I send it to you, and to your good little wife, and I take my chance of the objections to my having written it at all.'

The letter received prompt response:

'It is saying little to say that my feelings and understanding are wholly with you. I wish I could come to you (the illness of a child preventing). I doubt if any of your friends has a stronger feeling on this subject than A. (his wife). If I do not say more believe it is because everything I could say would seem idle and insufficient.'

By such friendships Mrs. Norton moulded the public opinion which remoulds laws.

The pamphlet, printed for private circulation, was written after the memorable scene in the Westminster County Court. A test case concerning her husband's liabilities and her debts having been submitted for trial, Mrs. Norton had been subpœnaed as one of the many witnesses summoned. Norton made it the occasion of a renewal of old accusations—an attack so brutal in its publicity and personality that Mrs. Norton, betrayed into the entire loss of self-possession, gave utterance then and there to the passion of the moment. The 'court 'burst into applause.' The law was still on George Norton's side, but public feeling anticipates the changes the public conscience demands.

With the letter to the Queen, and its masterly summing up of a life's experience and its practical application to the question of reform, Mrs. Norton's work was done. The sorrows and joys of her remaining years belong, not to the battlefield of the soldier, but to the private memories of the woman. To estimate the exact extent of Mrs. Norton's influence in determining the reform of law is impossible. Her views concerning the 'wild 'and stupid theories advanced by a few women, of "equal '"rights" and "equal intelligence,"' would commend themselves little to one section of present-day womanhood. 'I, 'for one, believe in the natural superiority of men. The natural 'position of woman is one of inferiority. Amen! . . . That is a 'thing of God's appointing not of man's devising,' she adds, with the light heart of a woman who has carried the citadel. And apart from jest, the drift of thought throughout her fictions emphasises her position. She was wholly adverse to any movement tending to subject the dignity of natural instincts, leading to wife and motherhood, to an ideal where intellectual aims or other ambitions predominate. She would have echoed George Eliot's mature conclusion with regard to the doctrines of advanced educationalists: 'Average people, who form the

'majority, should be taught to make their happiness in making 'the happiness of those around them.'* With many another woman she was quick to perceive that the exaltation of the intellectualist few inevitably leads to the depreciation of those natural emotions, in whose exercise, in regions the intellect knows not of, the well-being of the many will always lie.

Mary Shelley, who at twenty had written 'Frankenstein,' and whose passion for self-culture is demonstrated by the pages of her journal, unhesitatingly endorsed Mrs. Norton's views :†

'You speak of woman's intellect. We can scarcely do more than judge by ourselves. I know that, however clever I may be, there is in me a vacillation, a weakness, a want of eagle-winged resolution that appertains to my intellect as well as to my moral character, and renders me what I am, one of broken purposes, failing thoughts, and a heart all wounds. My mother had more energy of character ; still she had not force of imagination. In short, my belief is, whether there be sex in souls or not, that the sex of our material mechanism makes us quite different creatures, better though weaker, but wanting in the higher grades of intellect.' 'I cannot live,' she says elsewhere, 'without loving and being loved.'

And, in truth, to live without—for such women as Mary Wollstonecraft, Caroline Norton, Mary Shelley, and all whom nature has sealed for wife and motherhood—is to be defrauded of their highest heritage as human beings. To repeat. The woman who loves out of measure, Lady Caroline Lamb serves for example, defaces, not seldom, physically and mentally the substratum of the vital forces common both to man and woman. But the woman who of set purpose passes love by, incurs also risks it is well to face. In her the common basis of human nature is impaired by the suppression of the feminine element in union with which its perfection rests. Nature does not suffer deviations from what is normal without inflicting penalties physical and moral. Feminine instincts, frustrated, balked of their true aim, deflected from their true goal, exact reprisals not alone from the individual but from the race. Nor at the present day, in the most opposite worlds, worlds of utterly different tastes, pursuits and classes, are symptoms lacking which should serve as danger-signals to physiologist and psychologist alike.

* Quoted in The Englishwoman. Section, 'The Woman's Cause.'

† Letter to Mrs. Gisborne, 1835.

Art. III.—THE ENGLISH PEASANT.

1. *A History of the English Agricultural Labourer.* By Dr. W. Hasbach, Professor of Political Economy in the University of Kiel. Newly edited by the author and translated by Ruth Kenyon. London : P. S. King and Son. 1908.
2. *Life in an English Village: an Economic and Historical Survey of the Parish of Corsley in Wiltshire.* By M. F. Davies. London : T. Fisher Unwin. 1909.

The historian of the nineteenth century will certainly note among its salient features a remarkable movement which has resulted in the regeneration of the peasantry of England, and in a marked improvement of their condition. From a state of hopeless dependence they have risen to one of some independence, from paupers paid by the parish they are gradually becoming men of self-reliance, who earn substantial, if not high, wages. The labourer is now always in theory, and often in fact, a free and independent elector, one with a voice in the government of his country, whereas at the beginning of last century he had no more influence on the course and the management of public affairs than the cattle whom he tended in the fields. From a state of ignorance he is being raised to one of partial knowledge ; his children no longer use their strength in manual labour fields when they should be acquiring necessary elementary knowledge, and they receive a sound education without cost to their parents. They are thus placed, as they should be, in a position of equality with the children of the townsman ; they have before them a career. His wife and daughters have ceased to toil in the fields, and they can give to his home due attention as housewives. Those homes are not—through no fault of his—as healthy and commodious as they should be, but even the rural cottage is becoming better and more wholesome.

Such are the broad characteristics of the change which has come over this class of the community during the last century, in the beginning of which, owing to various causes, economical and social, the peasantry of England had fallen into a hapless state, and if Dr. Johnson's doctrine be sound, that the condition of the poor is the true mark of national discrimination, then one must admit that, though the state of the peasantry is neither perfect nor ideal, the advancement in their condition is a sign of national prosperity.

But it is impossible to understand these changes, or even the

present position of the English peasantry, and the possibilities and the probabilities of the future, without some knowledge of the history of this class in remoter times. We cannot separate the past from the present, and to form a fair judgement upon modern movements and schemes is impossible, unless we know in some degree at least how the present state of this class has been reached. Habits and customs cannot be suddenly changed by an Act of Parliament, and the power of social forces is often more effective than statutes of the realm. Many legislative mistakes would have been avoided, and many disappointments prevented, if the currents which have produced social results had been more accurately measured.

Though diminished in numbers, the rural labourers of England form a class of vital importance to the welfare of the country, and the outlines of its history we shall, in the following pages, endeavour to sketch. The story is sometimes depressing, for its culminating point is the economic and social downfall of a class, whilst the modern details of the narrative show that for a century and a half we have been trying in a rather half-hearted, and not very clear-sighted manner, to repair the well-meaning mistakes of our forefathers.

It is desirable, in the first place, to say a word on the two works which stand at the head of this article. That of Dr. Hasbach —without which this review of the English peasantry would have been a task of considerable difficulty—is an admirably careful and comprehensive volume, an immense storehouse of verified facts and figures. Compression such as is necessary for the completion of a work of this kind—which we could wish had come from the pen of one of our countrymen—a book which surveys the scene from the Saxon period to our own age, negatives literary art, but henceforth the student of English society will find in Dr. Hasbach's book a reliable and a permanent assistant. Miss Davies' book is a minnow by the side of a Triton, but it is not for this reason less valuable; it is an important as well as a close study of the economic and social condition of a single English village of to-day, which illustrates present conditions.

Even to-day, when modern life has lessened the picturesqueness and modified the idiosyncrasies of the village, the peasant oftentimes retains more marked and peculiar features than are to be found in other members of the community. Frederick Bettesworth working in a Surrey garden is of the same tough fibre and possesses the same uncomplaining endurance as Toussaint Lumineau toiling from sunrise to sunset among the verdant meadows of La Vendée. The true peasant seems almost a

part of the vegetation among which he labours. Tenacity and taciturnity, a narrow outlook united not infrequently among the shrewder men with a curiously clear vision, which is bred of hours of silent work behind the plough or in the sheepfold—'en travaillant, il continuait de raisonner sur les choses de la 'vie'—these traits everywhere characterise him.

But in works such as those we have just referred to and in others of a similar kind, we cannot study the peasant as a man; in these we must regard him as one of a class. The peasant in the field and in the cottage, in his habits and thoughts, can only be observed as a life study, or in the works of writers who have delineated him from first-hand observation—in the books of Mr. Hardy and Mr. Eden Phillpotts, for instance, who have presented us with so many admirable portraits of the peasantry of western England. But when considering agricultural labourers as a class, it is necessary to guard against too sweeping generalisations in relation to the individual, since a peasant whether prosperous or unfortunate will seem to live pretty much the same life. For labour of the countryside, all the world over, though it may differ locally, has necessarily certain broad and common characteristics; the simple annals of the poor have consequently many points of similarity in all lands and ages, and under varying fortunes.

Consequently in spite of the changes which each generation has witnessed, the same types are prominent, and tradition is often stronger than circumstance. Therefore in a review extending over a long period of time we must not forget that the leading features of each age, striking though they may be and essential to be understood, do not alter, to the degree that might be expected, many of the permanent features in the character of the English peasant.

It is time, however, to take a momentary survey of the early scene, of the agricultural labourer in the manorial system.

The free tenants of the manor were in a small degree and at exceptional times, such as seed-time and harvest, casual labourers on the home farm, and some fulfilled duties as superintendents, but the unfree men were principally the true predecessors of the rural labourers of our own day. These, too, were tenants either of large or small holdings, working on the demesne for three days in the one case, for a less time in the other. The cottagers—those who held only from two to five acres—formed yet another class, labouring for one day a week, without teams, and with hands and tools only.

But as both freemen and villeins were bound only to render certain definite services by the custom of the manor, there were

a number of workers, men especially concerned with live stock—shepherds and dairymen and women—who laboured on the demesne day by day and were usually paid by allowances of provisions and cloth, sometimes also by a share of the fruits of their labour or by the produce of small holdings. In a large measure therefore rural labour formed an element in a form of agricultural co-operation, in which almost every one, from the lord and his bailiffs and stewards down to the sower of the seed, had some interest in the land of the locality, forming a domestic working partnership and community which lived on and was attached to the soil.

'Towards the end of the twelfth century the manor represented a highly developed organisation of labour, but agricultural labourers in the modern sense were non-existent. The majority of the villagers did not work exclusively for others, the well-to-do villeins worked for themselves half or two-thirds of their time, and the freemen were mainly occupied on their own holdings. Almost all of them had land and capital; and most of them were personally unfree, and were therefore incapable of concluding a labour contract as understood in modern law. Here and there possibly a freeman may have hired himself out for wages, in which case he would become what we mean by a labourer.' *

From this form of intimate relationship there finally emerged three distinct and separate classes of persons interested in agriculture—landlords, tenant farmers, and day labourers, the latter having no proprietarial connexion with the land, while each class with its particular interest was adverse to the others. The landlord became a capitalist who desired to obtain the best return for his money; the tenant wished to pay as low a rent as possible to the landlord, and as small wages as possible to the labourer, and therefore from the point of view of both landlord and tenant an ill-paid and dependent labourer became desirable. The beginnings of the change from the ancient and harmonious form of agricultural life which we have already sketched are visible so early as the century and a half 1200 to 1350, a change produced, as every change in the condition of the rural labourer has been, by potent economical and political causes. The expansion of trade increased the prosperity and the population of the kingdom, men and money multiplied. The lord of the manor released the services of the tenants for cash, or received money instead of labour, and in their place there came upon the farm as labourers 'the propertyless offspring of freeholders, virgaters,

* Hasbach, p. 10.

'or cottiers, and also such tenants as had holdings too small to 'maintain them,' and in addition migratory labourers appeared at particular seasons, similar to the gangs of Irish labourers who during the last century were to be found at harvest time in some parts of England, and like the groups of wandering haycutters, who were a familiar feature up to the end of the last century in the meadows of Middlesex. The main division of the rural labourers thus became that of farm servants and ordinary day labourers. Simultaneously, however, with this change came another, the multiplication of holdings by tenants who paid rent to the great landowner, worked on his farm, and often employed the labour of the smaller farmer. But at the end of this particular period, 1348–9, that terrible national devastation the Black Plague broke out, resulting, from the diminution of population, in the rise of wages, and in a greater mobility of labour—in 'flights' of villeins. The Peasants' Rising of 1381—an event of national importance—was later a direct consequence of the unrest among the peasantry, which was produced by these several causes. But we must note the ordinance of 1349, the object of which, because of the deficiency of farm labourers, was to oblige 'every man or woman free or 'bond' to serve at a rate of wages not higher than heretofore. In 1351 came the Statute of Labourers, by which agricultural servants, carters, ploughmen, shepherds, swineherds, and all other servants were to appear, tools in hands, in the market towns, there to be publicly hired. Here, as Dr. Hasbach points out, we find the beginning of the labour-hiring fairs, so common in later years throughout England, and of which even yet in some remoter districts of the North traces may be found. More important still, we recognise in it a greater break-down of the old manorial system, and the creation of a class of agricultural workers not necessarily attached to the land. This legislation, like all legislation which is contrary to strong social and economical influences, was ineffective, as was that which followed whereby, among other things, it was attempted to prevent the migration of labourers into towns.* The advance in trade, the consequent growth of towns, and the comparatively small size of England, caused then, as it has caused since, and not in England only, a migration of the rural population to cities, where wealth, freedom, and amusement were to be found. Thus the politicians and the philanthropists of to-day who are endeavouring to find means to prevent the movement of the rural

* 34 Edward III. 30, c. 10. (The punishment of labourers, etc., departing from their service into another county.)

population to urban centres are engaged on the same task as their forefathers of the fourteenth century. Petitions were presented to Parliament in which 'it was prayed that villeins 'might not be admitted to towns, there to become artisans, 'mariners or clerks, and that their children might no longer be 'allowed to go to the schools nor to attain their freedom by 'admission into the town.'* In the wide-spreading lands of Central Europe there is not to be found the proximity which existed in England of town to country, of village to city; the geographical conditions of England thus in an early stage of its history affected the position of the agricultural labourer. The extension of English commerce demanded a supply of sailors, and it was through the seaports that this demand had in some measure to be supplied, and in this way maritime commerce affected the condition of rural workers, who, gravitating towards the towns, became in some degree by themselves or their children the makers of England's greatness on the seas. This early freedom of movement, drawing the more energetic from country to town, explains also to some extent the retrograde position of the English labourer through many generations. Even to the twentieth century the energy of the class showed itself not in attempts at political or social amelioration, but in departure from the stagnation and the dependence of rural districts to those urban centres where individual capacity of whatever kind found opportunity for developement. The making of England by means of commerce and seamanship thus affected the position of the rural workmen; but as these in more or less degree were, until the eighteenth century, connected with the land,† the townward migration merely prevented the growth of a labouring proletariat, while at the same time the mass of agricultural labourers became less energetic, more subservient, and, it may be, more con-

* Hasbach, p. 25, note.

† 'By the beginning of the seventeenth century free labour had come to be the predominant factor in the organisation of labour on the land; but the Legislature still put its freedom of movement under considerable limitations. The labouring class falls into two sections, namely, servants on the one hand, and day labourers on the other; and as compared with the pending period there was a change in the numerical proportion of servants to labourers. The labourers were not, however, propertyless. When the villages were yet untouched by enclosure they still held house, garden, stock, and right of common, and in many cases land also. Where enclosure had occurred it is true that a proletarian class had appeared; but even they had their connection with the land re-established by the Act of 1589.' Hasbach, p. 41.

tented than they would otherwise have been. But one lesson at least we may learn from this feature of medieval English life, that no measures, legislative or social, will in a country the size of England, with the facilities afforded by modern locomotion, ever keep the more active portions of the rural population on the land, for the same causes are at work to-day as existed in long past centuries. Movements of this kind may be retarded or accelerated, and alterations or modifications in the system of the tenure of English land, such as the facilitating of the transfer of real property, may cause men to remain more in rural districts, but that any large change is possible in a feature which has existed for centuries appears wholly unlikely.

When we look back over the national life, the inevitableness of the changes which culminated at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century, more especially the enclosures of common land, and the system of large farms, which affected the rural labourers so disastrously, appears clear. England was a commercial country—the commercial instinct was increasing. It affected the aristocracy, whose younger members sometimes became merchants; 'in England as well 'as in Italy to become a merchant of foreign commerce has 'been allowed as no disparagement to a gentleman born, 'especially to a younger brother' (1669). So the younger brother became a merchant, and the elder married the daughters of wealthy men of business, and merchants on the other hand invested their profits in land; for from the time of Elizabeth onwards there was a tendency to the purchase of landed estates by rich men from towns, and to the treatment of land from a business point of view. The landowner was in fact growing into an agricultural capitalist with aristocratic instincts in a feudal atmosphere. Small properties were in some measure swallowed up, and legislation favoured agriculture; the germs of the eighteenth-century revolution were in fact visible long before they became really active. Illegitimate enclosures were to be found in the sixteenth century, and they were certainly one cause of the agrarian outbreak in Norfolk of 1549, an outbreak which did something to check encroachment upon common pastures. The force of eighteenth-century enclosure, on the other hand, lay in its legality, and in the specious way in which it appeared to safeguard the interests of commoners. The peasant did not know till too late that his social and economical position was vitally and permanently changed. The importance then of the industrial revolution of the eighteenth century for our purpose lies in its effect on the English peasantry; it everywhere touched English agriculture with the business spirit,

which necessarily produced the enclosure not only of waste land but of common fields, scientific farming, and an alteration of the status of rural labourers. At its inception they were, if not farm servants living in the farmhouse and receiving much of their wages in kind,—

'day labourers, who found themselves in relatively comfortable circumstances. They mostly had holdings of their own, and in many parishes could also draw an income from the commons. They produced many of their requisite implements for themselves. Manufacture was in the domestic stage, or was pursued at home as a bye employment. Even in winter the labourer found no lack of employment; work was to be had in the woods as well as in the barns.' *

Soon this state of things was changed, and finally the modern peasant of the nineteenth century came into existence—one of the most dependent and helpless of human beings, badly paid, living on poor relief, or charity from the cradle to the grave, without political power, and with neither social, moral, nor political aspirations.

But just as marked social and economical movements tended to the degradation of the labourer, so on the other hand he has been influenced for good by remarkable national changes. It was impossible that he should be left out of modern democratic movements, and so in 1884 he received the franchise; the desire for a system of free education among the artisans of the towns could not but affect him, and after 1886 he was able to educate his children free of cost. His total severance from the land became more and more the subject of public concern as historical knowledge spread and public men began to perceive that work without hope is demoralising. Hence has arisen a movement in the towns to place the labourer again more in touch with the land, and the Small Holdings Acts of 1887–90–92 have followed, and also various statutes for the creation of allotments. But in all these movements the rural labourers themselves have taken little initiative, and the improvement in their condition has not originated either among landowners or tenant farmers, but has been influenced by those populous centres where intelligence is more vivid and sympathy is more marked. In this respect the modern movement has differed widely from the memorable agrarian outbreak of 1549 in the eastern counties under the leadership of Ket, the tanner, in which the several agricultural classes joined to prevent illegal enclosures and to obtain the redress of their grievances.

We have thus in our review arrived, as we have already said,

* Hasbach, p. 67.

at the eighteenth century, the age when the link between the land and the labourer was finally and completely severed. Although there had been in the past some labourers who were without this connexion, yet they formed a small minority, and the position of rural labourers generally before enclosures and large farms became common may succinctly be summed up in Dr. Hasbach's words: 'Cottagers rented their houses, and as a rule a small piece of land 'as well . . . there were little yeomen or copyholders in the same 'position economically, though in a different one legally. They too 'were under the necessity of putting their labour at the disposal of 'some employer.' The labourer was reduced from this semi-proprietarial position to one, as observers of the age noted, of a mere 'hireling,' and legislators and philanthropists, with the best intentions, for years to come successfully combined to increase his moral and social degradation. The causes of the change in the position of the labourers belong to the general history of the country; we have indicated the position before these effects were fully visible. After their operation was complete the peasantry had descended 'from a comfortable state of partial 'independence to the precarious condition of hirelings.' * These are the words in which a Berkshire clergyman sums up the position in 1795 of the rural labourers in his county. The state of the labourers varied to some extent in different parts of England, and the operation of social and industrial causes was not equal in its effects. Yet we may take the above quotation, that of an observer at once kindly and shrewd, to indicate in a general way the position of the peasant in the South of England towards the end of the eighteenth century. He had become habitually dependent on parish relief, men were reduced 'to the state of 'domesticated animals, fed, lodged, and provided for by the 'parish without mutual dependence or mutual interest.' And, if the peasant could not obtain that parish relief, which he looked on as a right, there were yet the doles of the charitable. He was badly fed and poorly housed, he had not sufficient money to clothe or educate his children, and the ale-house was his only place of amusement. He lived in what was in reality an habitual state of bankruptcy, for his wages were generally insufficient to cover his expenditure. Worst feature of all, he had become the most thriftless and hopeless of men. This position of dependence, the absence of any brightness in his future, is made more vivid by the remarkable progress in the same age of the middle class in comfort, in wealth, and in public spirit.

* 'The Case of the Labourers in Husbandry stated and considered,' by David Davies, Rector of Barkham, Berks. Bath, 1795.

Deprived of their interest in the land, the rural labourers thus fell, primarily through the above cause and next, through the administration of the Poor Law and through the action of the Legislature, into a depth of servility which brought the country face to face with a grave social crisis. In 1723 the workhouse system had been introduced, which in later years has proved to be, when properly worked, the best preventive against the pauperisation of able-bodied men and women. But in the time now under notice the workhouse was scarcely more than a kind of village almshouse. That which was erected at Corsley in Wiltshire, in 1773, was a thatched building capable of containing, apparently, some forty persons.

'In April 1774 there were thirty-six inmates, and in June another batch of regular pensioners appears to have been taken in. About twenty-five, however, remained outside the house, and the usual doles and payments for rent, clothing, and funeral expenses for those in receipt of outdoor relief continue in the same way as before.' *

Inside the house the inmates were well fed and clothed †; outside, a generous conception of poor relief prevailed. Thus in 1790—we are still drawing examples from the history of the same village—three shillings was given to a woman with which to begin housekeeping; outdoor relief was, in fact, an addition at the expense of the public to the wages which the labourer himself earned. But as the century drew towards its close the deplorable condition of the rural labourers, arising from causes to which reference has already been made, was aggravated by the measures which Parliament took with the intention of improving it, and the labourers were morally lowered without being materially benefited. By Gilbert's Act (22 Geo. III. c. 83), the first of several retrograde statutes, employment was to be sought for in the district for able-bodied unemployed workmen, and it likewise 'set up the fatal 'principle that the wages of those so employed should be received 'by the parish, which should, however, pay them a sufficient 'maintenance.' Hence arose three systems—the Roundsman, Labour-rate, and Parish Employment, each of which tended to increase the thriftlessness and the dependence of the labourer, and to reduce him to the lowest state as a citizen. Their economical and moral failure is instructive to-day, when the same principles are advocated in order to relieve those, whatever their manual occupation, who are unable to find employment. The

* Life in an English Village, p. 67.

† 'The bills for clothing indicate that the paupers were well dressed as well as well fed. Seven pairs of gloves were purchased for them in 1774.' *Ibid.* p. 71.

working of these three degrading systems will be understood by the following explanation, which is given by Dr. Hasbach :

'The Roundsman system itself was split into three sub-species : the ordinary system, the special system, and the pauper auction. By the first and most usual, "the parish in general makes some agreement with a farmer to sell him the labour of one or more paupers at a certain price, and pays to the pauper, out of the parish funds, the difference of that price and the allowance which the scale, according to the price of bread and the number of his children, awards him." By the second, "the parish contracts with some individual to have some work performed for him by paupers at a given price, the parish paying the paupers." By the auction system the unemployed, including the aged and infirm, were put up to auction weekly or monthly, and knocked down to the highest bidder.

'The Labour-rate system was an agreement between the rate-payers to employ each a certain number of paupers out of his own pocket, not according to his need for labour, but according to the amount of his rent or rates, or the number of the horses he used, or the extent of land he cultivated, or the like.

'However, in spite of all three forms of the Roundsman system and of this proportional allotment of labourers, the unemployed problem was still present. Moreover, these were not in universal use, nor everywhere applied to the same extent. Thus many parishes were forced, unless they preferred the easier method of alms-giving pure and simple, to employ their poor themselves, which they did often in an entirely unproductive manner, reminding one of the National Workshops of 1848. This is the method of Parish Employment. Large numbers of labourers were employed together, being known as "gangs," often under an overseer, who was usually quite powerless and not seldom terrorised. "Whatever may be the general character of the parish labourers," says the Report (of 1834 on the Poor Laws), "all the worst of the inhabitants are sure to be among the numbers ; and it is well known that the effect of such an association is always to degrade the good, not to elevate the bad. It was among these gangs, who had scarcely any other employment or amusement than to gather in groups and talk over their grievances, that the riots of 1830 appear to have originated.' *

Side by side with these several forms of the hiring out of the labourer by the parish, there grew up in the eastern counties the gang system, which continued beyond the middle of last century. These gangs, from twenty to forty in number, consisted of married women, young people of both sexes, and children, nomadic groups of cheap workers, sometimes, if the field of labour was near, living in their own homes, when it was distant sleeping in barns and outhouses. They were organised by a gang-master, by whom

* Hasbach, p. 188.

they were paid, and who in his turn received payment from the farmer for the work done by the gang, his profit arising from the difference between the sum received from the farmer and the sum paid to the workers. In no part of England had the business spirit of farming taken a greater hold than in the eastern counties, and the gang system was a direct result of it. 'It was, 'as a matter of fact, a profitable system for landlord and farmer. 'The landlord was at no expense for house building, and he 'escaped the burden of the poor rates, which otherwise would 'have been thrown upon him. The farmer got cheap labour, 'which worked rapidly, was always at his disposal when he 'wanted it, and could be dismissed as soon as the work was 'done.' * Here we see the divorce between the land and the labourer in its most acute and repulsive form. The majority of the gang workers lived in the 'open' villages; that is, the villages where the land was a good deal subdivided, so that there was house room in them, whereas in the 'closed villages' the landlord, who was generally the owner of most of the village, either refused to build new cottages, or pulled down old ones in order to prevent labourers from gaining a settlement in and becoming chargeable to the parish.† Thus we see these groups of workers under the control of a man having the status of a labourer, and who on an average appears to have by letting out labour made a profit somewhat above what he could earn as a labourer, moving about the agricultural districts of the east and eastern Midlands from various local centres, without regard to health, decency, or morality, regarded with no human interest by those who benefited from their work, living, it may be admitted, a life of freedom and not to say of irresponsibility, yet often urged to labour, sometimes by blows as well as words, though not more harshly treated than was natural under a system which was based on purely commercial motives. The public gang by degrees gave place to the private gang; in other words, the farmer became his own gang-master. Much adverse criticism has fallen on this individual which should rather have been advanced against a system than against persons, because it would be ridiculous to expect

* Hasbach, p. 198.

† 'The condition of the "open" villages at the present time does not appear to be equal to that of the close villages. Cottages in "open" villages are often very inferior in construction and condition and are often rented higher. They not infrequently belong to small owners who have invested savings in them. It will be readily understood that such owners have generally a very small margin, if any, available to spend in repairs or additions.' (Second Report on Earnings of Agricultural Labourers, 1905, p. 24.)

that a gang-master would have any other guiding motive than a desire to make as much as possible out of the labour of those he employed. There is no reason to suppose he 'sweated' his labourers more than any other man in a similar position would have done. He was in many respects one of them socially, and it is to his credit that when the system of private gangs came into vogue those who formed them were in a worse position than before the change; 'the 'members of the private gangs were paid lower wages, they were 'kept equally hard at work, their treatment was often worse.'

Thus by the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century the rural labourer had sunk socially, morally, and economically to the lowest possible state. It would have been hard for a peasantry to be in a worse condition, and their downfall, as has been shown, was in an inverse ratio to the rising prosperity of other classes. Their sole cause for thankfulness was that they lived in a free country. But the prosperity and improvement of other classes must sooner or later have affected the state of the rural labourer, and from about 1834 we are able to follow his ascending as we have watched his descending fortunes. This rise has not yet ceased, and in the future the connexion between the land and the labourer, which existed in medieval times, may to some extent return under widely different circumstances. Poor Law legislation and practice had—combined in the beginning of the nineteenth century with the high price of the necessaries of life—completed the ruin which changes of agriculture and the enclosure of commons and the abolition of common fields had begun, but, as we shall see, they presently raised the labourers from their unfortunate condition. We must date the period of the amelioration of their lot, economical, moral, and political, from the year 1834. It is not possible to fix accurately the close of the period of what Dr. Hasbach calls free labour, but which might perhaps be called proprietarial labour, to mark the connexion between the labourers and the land. Be that as it may, when we reach this particular year, and look before and after, we see plainly how the history of the English rural labourer falls into three distinct periods—the latest of which, extending over almost three-quarters of a century, has not yet ended. During this last period we see social progress, slow unquestionably, but unquestionably also sure, the remedying of past mistakes, and the modification of a state produced by causes which were essential to national progress and partly by measures intended to benefit the particular class whose fortunes we are now surveying.

Convenient though it is to emphasise the divisions which

present themselves so distinctly in a retrospect of the English peasantry, there is danger lest we forget that social habits and customs, though they may be modified by economical changes, do not alter sharply and quickly. As a partner in the cultivation of the soil, as one of a small community, the peasant shared in the simple enjoyments which were common to all rural inhabitants. As he became a hireling, and the division between classes became more defined, changes necessarily followed in his social existence. It became year by year less joyous, but it retained old forms long after the spirit of them was gone, and it was not until the end of the nineteenth century that the ancient English village life entirely ceased. That life has became more monotonous; harvest, and shearing, and wedding feasts are no more; the itinerant ballad-singer has for ever departed; the simple music which was a constant feature of village life down to the middle of the eighteenth century, and in places survived as the church orchestra with its violins and bassoons into the last century,—

> 'She turned in the high pew until her sight
> Swept the west gallery, and caught its row
> Of music-men with viol, flute, and bow,
> Against the sinking, sad tower window light,'—

that too has gone, even in remote Wessex.

But we must leave scenes of Arcadian simplicity to follow the history of the English peasant as he began to emerge from the moral and economical slough of despond in which he had been immersed by the immense change which came over the face of England on the destruction of the common field system.

The year 1834 is taken as the starting-point for the upward movement because a vital change in the administration of the Poor Laws was then inaugurated by the Legislature. The statute known as the Act for the Amendment and Better Administration of the Laws relating to the Poor in England and Wales, or, more shortly, the Poor Law Amendment Act, marks, says Dr. Hasbach, 'the beginning of a period of slow recovery in the labourer's 'standard of life, moral and material. But though it began the 'process of restoration, it was not passed primarily with a view 'to his interests, and it brought him not a little adversity.' Remedial action is often in its inception painful for a patient, and the demoralising effect of the old Poor Law had become so much a part of the ordinary existence of the rural labourer that the enforcement of new principles—and the Act was followed in 1839 by the stringent outdoor Prohibitory Relief order—was certain for a time and in places to be severely felt. It was aptly described by the late Professor Thorold Rogers as 'wholesome

'surgery.' We are not engaged in a consideration of the Poor Laws, and it is therefore sufficient to recall to our readers that the first principle of the new legislation was that paupers were to be relieved by admission to the workhouse; in other words, outdoor relief was to be regarded as an exceptional remedy for distress. The second principle—one which is in fact simply a corollary of the first—was 'the abrogation of the 'duty hitherto laid on the parish of finding work for the unem-'ployed and making an allowance in aid of inadequate wages.' It is not easy for us at this distance of time from the beginning of the application of this new principle, and living in an age when the indiscriminate allowance of outdoor relief is clearly recognised as demoralising to the recipient, adequately to appreciate the shock and the disturbance which this new principle must have caused to the peasantry of England. Men who had never given a moment's consideration to the question of earning an adequate livelihood, and had been satisfied to look to the public purse to fill the gap between their wages and their expenditure, and who, indeed, were often, as we have seen, paid by the parish, now found themselves face to face with the workhouse. The discipline was wholesome but severe. But the rural population, whose increase had been stimulated by the old Poor Law, was too numerous to allow of any increase in wages arising from scarcity of labour, in spite of the drain from purely agricultural work caused by the developement of railways and the greater facilities for emigration. Consequently the deficit between the wages of the chief bread-winner and the amount required to sustain the family had to some extent to be made up by the labour of the wife and children. Women's labour and child labour thus became important factors in rural life and economy. The labour of children continued until the passing of the Education Act of 1870, but though that of women declined in the 'seventies,' it did not become practically obsolete, except in the county of Northumberland, till the 'eighties.' If, as was the case, a woman could earn pretty regularly four shillings a week, and the wages of the husband were ten shillings a week—these additional four shillings represented in many instances the margin required to make both ends of the family weekly budget meet. When we note also the rise in the wages of the rural labourer himself during recent years we must likewise bear in mind the fact that it represents the amount which used to be earned by the combined field labour of husband and wife.

Economic changes, however beneficial, are inevitably accompanied by some personal hardship, and though the effect of the new administration was gradually to make the agricultural

labourer more manly, his financial position was in one sense worse, because his income was less certain. Wages did not rise substantially; there were fluctuations, and the rates of wages were variable. Thus in the north in 1850–51 they were 37 per cent. higher than in the south. Statistics, however, of wages sufficient on which to found very definite statements are unfortunately wanting; but there is evidence that on the whole wages rose—according to Caird the labourer's position had improved slightly since 1770. The average rate in the counties visited by Arthur Young had been 7*s.* 3*d.*, and Davies, whose book was published in 1795, states that 'the men's earnings (in 'Berkshire) on an average do not much, if at all, exceed 8*s.* a week.' In 1850 they were on an average 9*s.* 7*d.** If we accept the figures of the Report of the Royal Commission on Labour which was published in 1893, we find that the average was: 1869 to 1870, 12*s.* 3*d.*; 1869 to 1872, 14*s.* $8\frac{5}{7}$*d.*; 1880 to 1881, 14*s.* $1\frac{3}{4}$*d.*; 1880 to 1892, 13*s.* $5\frac{2}{3}$*d.*—showing, to use Dr. Hasbach's language, 'a mild improvement in the position of 'labourers in the south.' This 'mild improvement' appears to have continued, for in the Wiltshire village described by Miss Davies (1905–6) the average money wage of twenty-seven labourers was 13*s.* 11*d.*, and the actual real wage—that is, the money wage, plus the value of a cottage and garden and beer and harvest money—was 15*s.* $3\frac{1}{2}$*d.*† According to official

* The following table, 1850–51, is given: Average wages in the North, 11*s.* 6*d.*; South, 8*s.* 5*d.*; West, 10*s.*; East, 9*s.* 1*d.*

† 'The normal labourer's wage is 14*s.* or 15*s.* Out of twenty-seven labourers whose earnings have been ascertained, two-thirds receive one of these sums—*i.e.* eleven get 15*s.* and seven get 14*s.* More than half the labourers in receipt of 15*s.* are given beer as well; in the other cases the wage is nominally 14*s.* and 1*s.* extra in lieu of beer.

No. of Men	Money Wage	No. of Men	Real Wage
	s. *d.*		*s.* *d.*
11	15 0	2	17 0
7	14 0	6	16 6
5	13 0	6	16 0
3	12*s.* to 13*s.* according to season	2	15 6
		2	15 0
1	10 0	1	14 6
13	Unknown	3	14 0
—	—	1	13 6
—	—	1	13 0
—	—	3	12 6
—	—	13	Unknown

'The average money wage of the twenty-seven men is nearly 13*s.* 11*d.*; the average real wage is 15*s.* $3\frac{1}{2}$*d.* If we divide the

statistics, the average weekly wage of an agricultural labourer in 1902, including all allowances, was 17*s.* 5*d.* as against 16*s.* 9*d.* in 1898, showing an increase of 8*d.**

But the cost of some of the necessaries of life certainly diminished in the nineteenth century as the Free Trade measures of 1846 and the following years began to be felt, and railways touched the remote districts of the country. On the other hand, the labourer was still suffering from the loss of commons and common land—a loss which has to some extent of late years been partially lessened by the creation in places of allotments—a subject to which we shall presently refer. Yet in spite of the rise in wages which has continued to the present time it is pretty certain that a sufficiently high standard of wages in agricultural districts has not yet been reached. In Davies' instructive work he gives a number of family budgets, not only of persons living in his own county, but supplied by correspondents in various parts of the United Kingdom, the general result showing, on a comparison of income and expenditure, either an actual deficiency or a surplus so small as to be no protection against illness or old age. Miss Davies in her interesting study of a Wiltshire village has applied modern scientific tests to the labourers of a particular district in the south of England, one which may be regarded as a fair illustration of other villages south of London at the present time. In this village there were recently 220 families, and of these twenty-eight were in a state of primary poverty; that is, the income was below the amount required to supply the proper necessaries of life. The character of these twenty-eight households was: Able-bodied labourers, 16; retired market gardeners, 2; labourers retired from old age or sickness, 5; warrener, 1; women householders, 4.

Coming to the next grade, we find thirty-seven households

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twenty-seven into two groups, the first including the eighteen men with a wage of 14*s.* or 15*s.*, the second the nine men with lower wages, we get the following results:

	s.	*d.*
Group I.—Average money wage	14	7
Average real wage	16	1.2

'These eighteen men are working for farmers or employers resident in the parish.' (p. 117.)

* Second Report on wages, &c., of agricultural labourers, 1905 [Cd. 2376], p. 45. The highest average weekly wage was in Durham, 22*s.* 2*d.*, and the lowest in Oxfordshire, 14*s.* 6*d.* The average increase on sixty-nine selected farms, from 1850 to 1903, was 57 per cent.

which for one reason or another were in a state of secondary poverty; that is, whose income does not give a margin of 1*s.* per week above primary poverty. In other words, they have no reserve power to meet ill-fortune, whether it arises from want of employment or breakdown of health. Of these households thirteen are labourers, the rest carpenters, small shopkeepers, and nine are women householders. We find therefore twenty-nine households of labourers in a state of primary or secondary poverty; there remain forty-one households which are above this line, and of these forty-one only thirteen have a child or children in the household. In fact, the wages of an agricultural labourer in Wiltshire to-day are insufficient for the purposes of properly supporting a wife and family.

Again, out of a total of 121 children of labourers, seventy-six were brought up in a condition which precludes a sufficient supply of nourishing food or good clothing. In other words, this means that the agricultural labourer of the future has not that stamina—if he survives his childhood—to enable him to compete fairly in the battle of the world, and that the man of the present as of the past for some generations has been equally handicapped. 'These facts,' says Miss Davies, alluding to certain preceding statements, 'show emphatically that the 'dulness and deficiency of the children, even in a rural district 'where every advantage of good air and healthy surroundings 'is obtained, is mainly due to malnutrition.'

In addition to more formal statistics, a number of family budgets are given which not only illustrate how income and expenditure do or do not balance, but also present a vivid picture of the household of an English labourer in the present century. Individual capacity has, of course, much to do with the results of a week's earnings and expenditure, but no one can consider these figures without perceiving that the standard of agricultural wages in the south of England is too low for the proper upbringing of a family. Let us take, for example, the first budget which Miss Davies gives, that of a labourer with a wife and five children. His wages were 15*s.* per week, and all were given to the wife. He had to pay 1*s.* 6*d.* for house rent, 5*s.* a year for twenty poles of allotment ground, and 2*s.* 5*d.* to a friendly society. The deficit in this family statement between income and necessary expenditure, estimated by the standard accepted as necessary for proper sustenance, is 7*s.* 6*d.* The actual expenditure for the first week of January 1906 was 13*s.* $4\frac{3}{4}$*d.*, and for the second week 13*s.* $6\frac{3}{4}$*d.*; if house rent be added to this second week it would amount to 15*s.* $0\frac{3}{4}$*d.*; but in it there is no payment for clothing, and in the first week

6½*d.* only for stockings, so that something should be added for clothing; and it is also obvious that there is no margin for the allotment rent, the subscription to the friendly society, or for any contingencies, and there is an assumption that the food is sufficient, which, according to the standard taken as the basis for the test of poverty, it is not. A comparison between one of the family budgets collected by Miss Davies in 1905–6 with one of a similar family in the eighteenth century enables us to realise the improvement in the condition of the English peasant:

'Labourer, wife, six children (eldest boy of fourteen, youngest an infant).

'The family of eight live in a three-roomed cottage, which they get rent free, with small garden, from employer. The man's wage was 13*s.*; the boy's wage, 3*s.* 6*d.*—making 16*s.* 6*d.* per week.

'The man gets 3*l.* over-money at Christmas, and now and then a rabbit. In summer they are allowed to collect some firewood free.

'All earnings are given to the wife. They have no beer, and man keeps no pocket-money.

'Expenditure (*January* 6–12, 1906).

	s.	*d.*
Bread	3	11½
Flour	0	5
Tea	0	5
Sugar	0	8
Bacon	1	6
Cheese	1	2
Fresh butter	0	7½
Salt butter	0	6
Best lard	0	4
Soap	0	1½
Fresh pork	1	5
Candles	0	1½
Pepper	0	1
Mustard	0	1
Starch	0	1½
Cocoa	0	3½
Currants	0	2
Shoe blacking	0	1
	12	1

	s.	*d.*
Brought forward	12	1
Grate polish	0	1
Mr. N.'s Club	0	3½
Mrs. N.'s Clothing Club	0	3
Ellen's ,, ,,	0	2
Eva's ,, ,,	0	2
Cwt. coal	1	1½
Lamp oil	0	4½
Milk	0	3½
Salt	0	0½
1 dozen boot laces	0	2
1 reel black cotton	0	1
1 card angola	0	1
Wool for mending	0	2
Total expenditure	15	4½

The rest was put by for boots.'

'No. 1 (End of Eighteenth Century).

'Weekly expenses of a family—a man and his wife and five children, the eldest eight years of age, the youngest an infant:

	s.	*d.*
Flour: 7½ gallons, at 10*d.* per gallon	6	3
Yeast, to make it into bread, 2½*d.*, and salt, 1½*d.*	0	4
Bacon, 1 lb., boiled two or three times with greens; with bread and potatoes, makes a mess for children	0	8

Brought forward	7	3
Tea, 1 oz., 2*d.*; ¾ lb. sugar, 6*d.*; ½ lb. butter or lard, 4*d.*	1	0
Soap, ¼ lb. at 9*d.* per lb.	0	2¼
Candles, ⅓ lb. one week with another at a medium, at 9*d.*	0	3
Thread, thrum and worsted, for mending apparel, &c. .	0	3
Total	8	11¼*

If from the point of view of medical science the labourer and his family have not now sufficient of nourishing food and warm clothing to enable them to live up to a proper standard of health, one cannot but ask the question, What would the scientist of to-day say of the living of the labourer in the eighteenth century? The answer would doubtless be that it was wholly inadequate and was the cause of immense mortality.

It is impossible in a review of a subject which extends over a long period of time to enter at greater length into this branch of it; the general conclusion only can be formulated that the lot of the labourer in regard to wages, though it is improved, is not yet everywhere satisfactory. But in relation to this point it is impossible to overlook the important effect of the Old Age Pensions Act upon the condition of the rural labourer. By the gift of old age pensions the State has made up the difference which existed in many rural budgets between an actual balance of expenditure and income, and a provision as a reserve for old age. The expenditure may in many cases be insufficient, if judged by a proper standard, but it is often not greater than the income, though at the same time it permits of no provision for old age. Recent legislation has changed all this, and a labourer who is now able to make income and expenditure meet is not, as he was before the passing of the Pensions Act, certain to be without means when his days of work are over. On the contrary, from a purely economical point of view, he is doing all that is required of him —paying his way in the present, and with a provision for the future. It is perhaps irrelevant to this particular subject to point out that whilst therefore the Pensions Act as regards the rural labourer is apparently not detrimental to thrift, it may be so in cases of those artizans who receive much higher wages than the country workmen, but do not put by money for old age. On the other hand, it is obvious that a result of this same legislation must be to save the pockets of farmers in one way, because the gift by the State of old age pensions will probably prevent for a long time any demand for a further rise in agri-

* The Case of the Labourers in Husbandry, p. 8.

cultural wages, whilst the burden of old age pensions is borne by the whole community without reference to their occupations.

A consideration of the position of the peasant as a wage-earner to-day leads of necessity to a reference to the subject of agricultural unions, of which from time to time during the last century not a little was heard, and the existence of which had certainly a remarkable bearing on the wages of agricultural labourers throughout large districts of England, especially in the southern Midlands and in the Eastern counties. Important as the unions were, we can now see clearly enough that in point of time they do not fill a large space in the history of the agricultural labourer, and that they were an ephemeral phenomenon; the surprising thing is that they had even for a time sufficient cohesion and power to produce any appreciable effects. As to their influence on wages it is difficult to dogmatise, for their exact results upon wages and upon the general position of the labourer are difficult if not impossible to ascertain. Commencing in the spring of 1872, the movement has continued with various fluctuations, as in a sudden spurt in 1894, until the present time, when it may be considered, for practical purposes, to have come to an end.*

The first years of this new and unforeseen movement were vigorous and sufficiently remarkable; it attracted the attention and the sympathy, as well as the material aid, of social reformers in walks of life altogether removed from the quiet existence of the peasant. To these, indeed, it owed not a little of whatever influence it may have had. It provoked the resentment of many landlords and farmers, whilst it showed that the time had gone by when agricultural labourers as a class could be regarded as a negligible element in the economical and political evolution of the people. The variety of objects aimed at by the unions was at once their weakness and their strength, and caused them to be regarded with suspicion and even dislike by the conservative elements in the country; on the other hand, it tended to the general amelioration of the condition of the labourer. These results were as valuable as the apparent rise in wages which they effected. The difficulties of combination among a class indefinite in extent, formed of men suspicious of one another, and one constantly subject to invasion by casual labourers, were great, and they were increased by the fact that after the National Agricultural Labourers' Union was

* The only unions now (February 1910) known to the Board of Trade are the Eastern Counties Labourers' and Small Holders' Union (membership at end of 1908, 5120), and the Amalgamated Labour League, Fakenham, Norfolk (membership at end of 1908, 20).

established the Federal Union of Agricultural and General Labourers also came into existence. This Federation was itself so loosely formed that from about 1878 'three unions 'were working independently of one another.' But in spite of these and other vicissitudes wages had by the end of 1875 risen. The supervening agricultural crisis had, however, the effect of depressing this gain, and but for the emigration which had been fostered by the unions, and the migration to the towns, the condition of the rural labourer might have been worse. Indeed, the migration to urban districts which has been so much deplored has, it must be borne in mind, while diminishing the amount of labour, been simultaneous with the increase of labour-saving machinery and with changes in farming. Yet, in spite of bad agricultural times, Dr. Hasbach is of opinion that in 1881 'wages still stood higher everywhere than they 'had done before the strikes.'

In 1890 another period of comparative vitality in the history of agricultural trades unionism commenced: new bodies were formed, and by the end of 1892 the members of the Eastern Counties Labour Federation, whose headquarters were at Ipswich, numbered 17,000, distributed among 174 branches, while the National Union in 1890 had 14,000 members, consisting of agricultural and general labourers. But just as the earlier movement had been largely vitalised by the external influence of philanthropists and social reformers, so the movement of 1890 was caused to some extent by the strike and agitation among the dock labourers on the Thames. The friendly society element which forms so important, and to many artizans the most attractive feature of the trades union system was conspicuously absent, so that the latest phase of the agricultural unions was essentially one of militant reform. Combinations which could not give general pecuniary benefit to their members—especially when those members were men so poorly paid, so widely scattered, so unskilled, and so handicapped for purposes of leadership and union—were little likely to have a permanent existence, and the severe winter of 1893–4 marked another decline in the fortunes of the agricultural unions—a decline which has practically ended in their collapse at a time when other artizans are stronger in the power of combination than at any previous period. Yet unquestionably they have had a marked influence on the condition of the rural labourers: they drew upon them the attention of the nation; they showed that, unorganised though the peasantry were as a class, they were yet capable at any rate of temporary union, and that for sufficient reasons and with energetic leaders they were a force to be reckoned with.

'The unions shook the labourer,' are Dr. Hasbach's conclusions, 'out of his hopelessness and indifference, they implanted in him 'the aspiration for better conditions of labour, and they educated 'him politically. Without the unions he would not, apparently, 'have received the franchise in 1884.' Looking back from the standpoint of to-day over the history of the English rural labourer, we must note that the unionist movement marks a period of renaissance—one in which hope and independence become distinct elements in his life.

It is difficult to estimate the effect of the unionist movement upon the provision of allotments for rural labourers: that it attracted public attention to their state cannot be doubted, and the moment that state came under consideration the question of allotments—or, in other words, the divorce between a man whose daily toil was on the land and whose interest depended on it, and the land itself—could not but strike every impartial observer with alarm. But in spite of economical arguments and of the pressure of theories of scientific farming, and perhaps of the increase in the preservation of game, the public conscience, represented by the more thinking portions of the community, had never been altogether easy at the wholesale change produced by enclosures and 'the consolidation of farms' which is so marked a feature in the eighteenth century. Arthur Young and others of his opinion never, we may be sure, foresaw that a change of agricultural system would have such stupendous and far-reaching results—results which it may fairly be said it is the aim of public men to modify to-day. The first attempts to secure allotments were in the nature of the preservation of portions of enclosures for the use of the labourers, as is shown by the provisions of the Acts of 1801 and the General Enclosure Act of 1845; but these statutes failed of their purpose, for in 1869 out of the 614,800 acres enclosed since 1845 only 2223 had been assigned to the poor.* But the actual provision of allotments in a less negative manner had not been lost sight of. This is well summarised by Dr. Hasbach.†

* Even the modern phrase 'three acres and a cow' originated in the eighteenth century. Kent ('Hints to Gentlemen of Landed Property,' p. 235) says: 'It would have an excellent effect to make some gradation among cottages as well as farms; it would be highly proper and useful to lay beside the half acre of garden ground a small portion of pasture land, of about *three acres*, to each of these last cottages, to enable the occupiers of them to support a cow.'

† Hasbach, p. 116. Another authority (Slater, 'The English Peasantry and Enclosure of Common Fields,' p. 118) says that between 1845 and 1875, out of a total area of 590,000 acres en-

'Political agitation and the distress of the years which followed the peace led in 1819 to the passing of an Act empowering the Poor Law authorities to put land under cultivation by the poor; the land might belong or not to the parish, and if not might be either bought or leased; and it might either be farmed by the parish itself, or be let out to the poor in allotments. Twelve years later the principle received a further extension. In 1819 the parish had only been authorised to rent or buy land up to the extent of twenty acres. The Act of 1831 put the limit at fifty acres, and allowed the parish also to enclose such Crown lands as consisted of forest or waste up to the same extent and for the same purpose, by consent of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; or uncultivated common land by consent of the Lord of the Manor.

'In the following year an attempt was made to put still more land at the labourer's disposal. Earlier enclosures had allotted part of the commons to the poor in order that they might provide themselves with fuel; but the land had in many cases proved unsuited to this purpose. An Act of 1832 ordered (it was the first compulsory act of the kind) that the trustees and parish officers should let land of this description in allotments to any industrious and honest labourers who asked for it; the rents to be applied to the purchase of firewood, coal, &c.' *

But neither with landlords nor with farmers were allotments popular, and though in places enlightened owners were found to give land for this purpose, yet this provision, which has over and over again been shown by independent observers and judicial inquirers to be of vital importance to the well-being of the rural worker, has never been cordially supplied by the landowning class as a whole; whilst it has been stubbornly opposed by tenant-farmers, who have always been more out of sympathy with the aims and the well-being of the peasantry than have the actual owners of the land. We have already in the preceding quotation shown the earlier steps in the provision of allotments; later steps are formulated in the Allotment Acts of 1882 and 1887, with which the name of Mr. Jesse Collings must always be honourably associated. The original Bill of this gentleman in 1887 had provided for the creation of small holdings as well as of allotments; but it was not until 1890 that a measure became law to provide holdings between one and fifty acres for the purpose of purchase, and one and fifteen acres for the purpose of tenancies—the administrative organ for this purpose being the county

closed, 1758 were set aside for recreation grounds, and 2195 for field gardens and allotments.

* Hasbach, p. 211.

council. This legislation, it is scarcely necessary to mention, has since been followed by the Acts of 1907 and 1908.

It is obvious from this review that for more than a century there has existed a movement, feeble at the beginning and increasing in force, to renew the association of the labourer with the land. The weakness of it has been caused by the fact that the persons who would most benefit by it have not had the energy, the independence, or the power to give it momentum, and it is a singular feature of the later development that its force has been in a large measure urban. In other words, the crowded cities have sought relief by demanding that the migration from the country should be stopped by giving the rural labourer more ties with the land. Two great classes have viewed it coldly—landlords and tenant-farmers ; and to the former has almost entirely fallen the administration of the system of allotments and small holdings. In their hands it remains. That the farmer should view it with disapprobation is not surprising. The tendency of modern business is towards the creation of large concerns, and by the side of the large tenant-farmer the small holder represents the small retail dealer of the towns. If, therefore, anything be a matter for surprise, it is that the movement has not been even slower than we have seen has been the case ; and it is evident that with all the legislative assistance in the world, the extension of the connexion between the labourer and the land must arise chiefly from the efforts of the labourers themselves as a force in politics and local administration. Yet in this respect it must be admitted that they have many difficulties before them, for the long servility of the rural labourer cannot die away in a generation or two, and in remoter country districts the landowner still dislikes any show of independence in the manual labourer ; and, as we have seen, circumstances prevent that power of efficient combination which has been the chief cause of the amelioration of the condition of the urban worker. Yet if one thing be clearer than another, it is that the effects of the immense social change—the uprooting of the English peasantry from the soil, and the destruction of the village as an industrial and agricultural community—which occurred chiefly in the eighteenth century, can never be materially lessened until the agricultural labourer is once more—not in isolated districts, but generally—placed again on the soil as tenant or as owner. The agricultural reformers of the eighteenth century, it is certain, did not estimate or realise the results of a change which they regarded almost entirely from an economical point of view.

But it is time to cease this review of the past and to ask,

What of the future? We are still in that long period of transition and of amelioration which commenced in 1834, and though a quickened sense of public responsibility may cause pessimistic views by some to be formed of the agricultural labourers of England, none can doubt that during this period their material and moral state has strikingly improved. A sense of citizenship has unquestionably been created by the extension of the franchise, which is now exercised by a generation which begins to show the beneficial effects of modern Education Acts. There is also in existence a class which—partially, at any rate—possesses a sense of public duty and the elements of common knowledge, two factors which were wholly wanting in the earlier years of the last century; old age has, too, lost some of its terrors. A peasantry must in the bulk be manual labourers, but we have only to look back to the earlier ages of our national life to see that there may be a connexion between proprietorship and labour, and it is the renewal of this connexion in a practical form which should be the aim of public men; in other words, of the combination between large and small farmers. Small holders of land have many possibilities of success, particularly in districts where produce suitable for small culture can be profitably marketed. But the small holder, if he is to form a considerable part of the agricultural community, must necessarily be also an agricultural labourer, and should form a link between the mere labourer and the large farmer. 'If the 'labourer is ever again to love his native place, village society 'will have to be radically democratised, and there must be, 'as in former centuries, a large intermediate grade, or rather 'grades, of small farmers and small proprietors.' The want of sympathy and the antagonism between the farmer and the agricultural labourer, which unquestionably had its origin in the eighteenth century, when the farmer became purely a capitalist and the labourer a mere hireling, can only be completely dispelled by a renewal of the links which were destroyed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The English system of agricultural tenancies is too firmly fixed, and the position of the agricultural tenant is now too favourable, to allow of a probability of an extensive change from leasehold to freehold tenures. Small freeholds, therefore, will be the exception, though legislation such as is contemplated by Mr. Jesse Collings' recently introduced Bill—one not very palatable, we suspect, to many of the Unionist party—may stimulate their acquisition. Still, whether the peasant be a tenant or a freeholder, we may confidently look forward to a time when he will have resumed some interest as a proprietor.

This renewal must, however, be chiefly effected by education, elementary and technical, and political power, both of which by placing Hodge on a level with his master, politically and intellectually, fit him to join the ranks of the smaller agriculturists, and in some cases, as in commerce, to reach a higher position. 'A career must be found for striving 'labourers. No shadow of an excuse must remain to justify 'the assertion that an artizan may rise to be a master, a 'mechanic to be an engineer, a factory operative to be a 'capitalist, but no English agricultural labourer in his most 'sanguine dreams has the vista of occupying, still less of pos-'sessing, land.' * The landlord and the farmer must regard the labourer as a partner and not as a dependent hireling, and his moral and economic rise not as an encroachment on their rights and privileges, but as an additional strength to English agriculture, and a new support to the ownership of land. Decent and wholesome houses, again, are a necessity for a class with any self-respect; it is impossible to educate men, and then ask them to live in hovels; and therefore the supply of suitable cottages all over the rural districts is a pressing need in the further improvement of the condition of English peasants. This supply will probably have to be provided by local authorities; for, though in every county there are admirable exceptions, the landlords of England have for many years shown an insufficient appreciation of their duty in regard to the provision of houses for agricultural labourers, and, as capitalists, they naturally avoid the expenditure of money on unprofitable objects. The farmers who have been and are their tenants have, for the same reasons, been even more indifferent. Still, we may look forward to the time when those who are not holders of land will generally be well housed, with a permanent if small interest in the land in the shape of ample gardens or allotments, and when in consequence there will be a closer connexion between the highest and the lowest grades of agriculturists. The general lines of rural life in England are too firmly fixed to make probable any drastic change in the face and society of the country districts, and the attractions of cities are too strong to allow the more active natures to remain on the land. But with the enlargement of their careers, with better homes, and with a closer connexion between the peasantry and the soil on which they work, the future of the English rural labourers should more resemble the ideal state which it has long held in the dreams of poets, but which has not existed in reality.

* 'Annals of the British Peasantry,' by Russell M. Garnier, p. 136

Art. IV.—ART AND PRACTICE.

1. *Questionings on Criticism and Beauty.* The Romanes Lecture, 1909. By A. J. Balfour. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
2. *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic.* By Benedetto Croce. Translated by Douglas Ainslie. London: Macmillan. 1909.
3. *Notes on the Science of Picture Making.* By C. J. Holmes. New and Revised Edition. London: Chatto and Windus. 1909.
4. *Modern Art.* By Julius Meier-Graefe. Translated by Florence Simmonds and George W. Chrystal. 2 vols. London: Heinemann. 1908.

Mr. Balfour's essay upon Beauty and the Criticism of Beauty, delivered at Oxford as the Romanes Lecture, will appear, no doubt, in his official biography as little more than a foot-note. Admittedly hurried and imperfect in its composition, and making little attempt at thorough analysis or constructive philosophy, it will be relegated by the historian to the position of some casual after-dinner speech upon a non-political theme. The pondered deliverances of statesmen are those that give the measure of their real value, for they express the ideals and aspirations of the man and represent all that he wishes to be and to effect upon the stage of history. But careless and spontaneous utterances such as this have also a real interest to the student of the man, and Mr. Balfour's essay has all the charm and interest of a crystallised conversation. Like most conversations, it ends somewhat ineffectively. Mr. Balfour points out that no adequate philosophy of the aesthetic emotions can be reached by the road of criticism, but he consoles his hearers by reminding them that the practical emotions, which are of greater importance than the aesthetic, are equally incapable of any logical or philosophic treatment. This conclusion is reached immediately from two premises. In the first place, it is assumed that criticism has itself abandoned as hopeless the task of laying down the principles in which beauty consists; in the second, that the value of a work of art, of art as a whole, has rightly ceased to be estimated by its service to the individual or to the State. The first premise justifies the scepticism of the conclusion; the dissociation of the aesthetic emotions from the practical, which is explicitly the basis of the second assumption, is the starting-point for the number of valuable observations which make up the essay, and without it

the precise form of antithesis in which the conclusion is stated would have been meaningless and impossible.

Precisely because the lecture is conversational in character, its assumptions possess the greatest interest. Were Mr. Balfour developing, as a philosophic theme, the theory that the aesthetic emotion must be dissociated from the practical, his essay would have had interest solely as throwing light upon his own character or as an independent contribution to the philosophy of art. But he puts the assumption forward as something universally recognised and accepted—the only positive assertion, in fact, among all the negations of his essay—and by the very position of the speaker the doctrine is immediately stamped as characteristic of the present age. The spontaneous and unconscious expression of its views by the man whom the generation has accepted as one of its leaders in the field of statesmanship is far more representative of the ideas of the age than the words of its professional philosophers, for it is the utterance of the layman *in excelsis*. Even if all men do not assent to the doctrine, it cannot be denied that it is sufficiently accepted to form a conversational opening. Thus seen, Mr. Balfour's essay becomes of capital importance. An idea which only one generation ago appeared so extravagant that to hold it was to court ridicule in *Punch* or to attain immortality in a comic opera, is the idea assumed, among all the condemned contradictions of the critics, as the self-evident basis from which to advance to a general conclusion. 'The 'complete divorce of art from morality'; 'The total want of 'connexion between the aesthetic emotions and the practical'; 'Art for Art,' in short, are the commonplaces of the day. They are, in fact, so firmly established that to show their barrenness, as Mr. Balfour does in a series of brilliant observations, does not in the least suggest that they may be false and something else true, but only serves to assist in arriving at an all-embracing negation.

The two books which seem to have been most prominently before Mr. Balfour when he composed his lecture exhibit more thoroughly than he the grounds and the extent of the aesthetic theory. One is a translation of Signor Benedetto Croce's 'Aesthetic,' which is quoted by Mr. Balfour in his lecture; the other is the 'Notes on the Science of Picture Making' by Mr. C. J. Holmes, Slade Professor of Fine Art at the University before which Mr. Balfour was lecturing. The two books start from completely different points of view. Signor Croce adopts the attitude of a pure metaphysician, and barely regards the work of art in its concrete form. Mr. Holmes, as his title suggests, is concerned primarily with the actual creation of the work of

art, limiting his observations entirely to painting. The two books thus supplement each other, and may be taken as representing from the two ends of the scale the whole extent of modern theory. It is Signor Croce's merit among metaphysicians that he recognises the real and inherent difference between aesthetic activity or experience and all other forms of activity or experience. His book is little more than a statement that art is unique and real and not a form of some other activity or experience, just as the works of other modern philosophers are vindications of the reality and uniqueness of matter or thought or space or time. The greater part of the remainder of the book is a refutation of other theories and an effort to dispel illusions by which the author imagines other writers to be beguiled. His definition of art as 'expressed intuition,' or rather as intuition which consists itself of expression, is for the present purpose scarcely important, and it lands the author in a number of difficulties which only the professional language of the metaphysician and the acumen of incidental observations are able to obscure. The most important feature of his theory is that he gives barely an indication of the real character of the emotion or feeling expressed in and aroused by a work of art, and only suggests in passing the possible existence of principles of selection. Having entirely divorced artistic activity from the practical activity, he returns in a parenthetic passage—as an afterthought in the chapter on Technique—to the demands of practical life as determining the selection of one artistic impression rather than another; but this note is a rare admission, which, if fully elaborated, would demand the re-writing of the whole book. By his hypothesis all sensible impressions are equally subjects of art. The only mark of beauty is coherent successful expression. Ugliness is unsuccessful expression. The feeling called aesthetic is merely the feeling which accompanies the intuition as such; the only pleasure which is truly aesthetic is the pleasure which the creator feels at having successfully expressed or the observer at beholding a successful expression. Thus, if the theory be taken in the strict sense, the aesthetic nature of a work of art is for all practical purposes negligible by the critic, for, compared with the feeling actually represented in the work, the feeling aroused by the act of representation is of no importance. Or if the theory is extended, it becomes merely a pseudo-philosophical expression of the doctrine that all feelings are equally valuable for the purpose of artistic representation, the necessities and the laws of practical life being inapplicable to a work of art. It is evidently in the latter sense, although it is contradicted in the book itself, that the whole

tenor of the work leads it to be interpreted, while in the former sense the activity of art is not differentiated in any way from the activities of practical life—all action becomes art, and fine art has nothing whatever to distinguish it from craft.

Professor Holmes' book, much more modest in its pretensions, is infinitely more full in its content. Its great merit is that it enounces clearly, and elaborates fully, the doctrine that every detail of a work of art, from the choice of the material in which it is wrought to the selection of the subject and the manner of representation, is conditioned by the emotion of the artist and is a means for the expression and the communication of that emotion. This doctrine is the refutation of all theories of art which are based upon a differentiation of form and content, and it is the only starting-point for an inquiry into the specific features of each particular art. Taking painting as his subject, Mr. Holmes elaborates with great detail an analysis of the materials and of the decorative or formal qualities of the picture as a means of expression; and as an analysis of these qualities, though it may, of course, be criticised in detail, the book is unaffected by any general considerations of more far-reaching aesthetic philosophy. But Mr. Holmes offers his book as more than a handbook for the composition and the criticism of the pictorial work. He puts forward a definition of painting and a theory of art as an eirenicon among the conflicts and rivalries of different schools. His solution makes the art as independent of all practical or moral considerations as does Signor Croce's. Personal, emotional experience expressed in decorative forms is for him the essence of art. Such emphasis is laid upon the personal aspect that all mention of the universal is excluded from the definition, and universal ideals only appear as centres from which the individual makes his departure. The emphasis upon emotion renders superfluous all consideration of the subject of the work of art, and where an analysis of the emotions themselves is to be expected, the instinct of the professional artist becomes paramount in the author, and his desire to uphold the freedom of the artist causes him to subordinate his consideration of the emotions to that of the decorative qualities. Here, alone, certain laws and criterions of value are admitted, and where an older writer would have discussed the various methods of expression as being appropriate to the given theme or purpose, Mr. Holmes reverses the order, and, beginning with the material and the means, discusses the emotions of the subjects simply as being appropriate to them. Though the book abounds in reservations and in statements which show that Mr. Holmes is quite alive to the importance of subject and of universal con-

ceptions in a work of art, he lays such stress upon the decorative element—more especially in his general chapters, such as that on the 'Future of Art'—and escapes so invariably from the difficulties of other problems by passing to the consideration of the decorative aspect, that the whole effect is to produce the impression that decoration is the sole material consideration, and that the character and value of the emotion or of the experience is in itself of no account. 'The painter's emotion,' he says, 'is a very different thing from the emotions of everyday life, 'from joy, sorrow, anger, and the like.' This is the upshot of Signor Croce's theory accepted in its wider sense, and it is also the basis of Mr. Balfour's position.

Turning from these works to the actual characteristics of modern art, and keeping the attention fixed, as it is in these books, on the form of art which is the simplest to analyse, namely, painting, it is impossible for the sympathetic observer not to recognise at once that the one generalisation which can be made with safety is that no regulative principle is possible to discover among them. Colourists, Decorators, Naturalists, Symbolists, Simplifiers, Sensationalists, Impressionists, all start with an end in view which appears irreducible to any terms but their own. Modern art cries to be judged by itself alone, each form of it to be judged only by its own laws. Nowhere is this more evident than in the series of brilliant essays on modern painters by Herr Julius Meier-Gräfe, which has recently been translated into English and thereby rendered as nearly intelligible as is possible. Herr Meier-Gräfe appears to be longing for some principle of estimation, some theory of values, some safe starting-point from which to judge the various artists whose work he admires and condemns. As an interpreter he can suggest the meaning of the painter's work, showing its value from its own point of view; as a judge he is for ever dissatisfied, always uneasy. Nor is he unconscious of the cause. He begins his account with the thesis that art has destroyed itself by claiming a freedom to which it has no right. But, too deeply imbued with the spirit of the art which he is criticising, he means no more by freedom than liberation from decorative restrictions. The modern picture which can fit with anything is worthless, and fits with nothing; a medieval mosaic was forced to fulfil a certain architectural requirement; its purpose resulted in its value. It is not surprising that the criticism of individual artists from such a general view of art is confused and obscure, but the very obscurity arises from regarding modern art from its own point of view. Herr Meier-Gräfe's book is a more illuminating and adequate account

of modern art from its very want of guiding principles than would be a more intelligible and consistent representation.

If these books may be taken as representative, Mr. Balfour has correctly summed up the leading characteristics of the modern aesthetic point of view in his insistence upon the independence of the aesthetic emotions from all practical considerations. But in order to make himself clear he should have told his hearers what these aesthetic emotions really are. This he does not do. The pleasures from neatness, dexterity, or the presentation of anything that seems to us suitable are mentioned, but they are committed to the lowest end of the aesthetic scale. They cannot be contrasted with patriotism, love of humanity, or religion, which are quoted as the noblest of practical emotions. Therefore Mr. Balfour is compelled to imagine certain higher aesthetic emotions as the aesthetic counterparts of the practical. But he does not name them. Signor Croce is more consistent in recognising only the third of Mr. Balfour's lower emotions as the only one which is truly aesthetic. Professor Holmes implies the presence of emotions, and by emphasising the independence of art suggests their difference from the practical. But he, too, does not analyse them or show their difference. Do they exist? A generation ago, when some moral or utilitarian end was required from a work of art in order that it might be justified, those who could appreciate merit in an immoral or an unpractical work would have answered the question with a strong affirmative. All the qualities which could not be reconciled with some all-pervading practical or moral emotion were classed as 'technical.' The revulsion from the ethical and intellectual standpoint in modern art criticism which may be dated in England with the writings of Whistler and R. A. M. Stevenson has given the whole of aesthetic excellence to the technical qualities, but even in these days men distinguish between the art which really moves them and that which they merely admire, and they, too, call the one class beautiful, and say of the other that it has technical merit. A consideration of this antithesis by means of an analysis of the 'technical' may therefore serve to illuminate the obscure centre of Mr. Balfour's argument and to exhibit the degree of truth and untruth in the position which he represents and the view which that position supplants.

It is possible to analyse the field of any art into four divisions. These are not separate and as it were contiguous, but they are superimposed, and the higher necessarily implies the lower. They may be called the material, the decorative, the objective, and the emotional.

The first of these requires no elaborate consideration. It is

the material—words, signs, sounds, or movements—that differentiates one art from another and distinguishes the various branches of the same art. To the working artist mere material is of the greatest importance, and, as it includes the various methods of handling, and the appearance of the work of art depends upon the condition of the material, it takes a very large place in aesthetic appreciation. Further, changes in the prevailing material, inventions which scarcely even deserve the name of technical devices, may appear to alter the whole current of an art. The economic historian might date the whole change in painting which came in Italy with the High Renaissance to the discovery of the proper use of oils. Of course the change was due to the minds which were able to employ the new material and the intellectual environment which found it suitable; but it is just the fact that the vision of the working artist is limited by his material and that it expresses itself in terms of the material that renders it different from that of the ordinary man.

Next to the materials, and like them a part of the actual appearance of the work of art itself, comes the decorative element. The more clearly a work of art can be separated from that which it expresses or represents—sight, sound, or emotion, the clearer is its decorative quality. Painters are accustomed to speak of the 'Blot' of a picture, meaning its immediate appearance as colour, line, massing, or flat space. The other arts which do not produce so easily separable an object as a picture are not so readily judged by the 'Blot.' But music may appear as nothing more than a succession of sounds, and prose or poetry as but rhythmic words, and, further, in poem or in music the proportion of the parts, the relative warmth and coolness of the passages, the swing of the narrative or of the expression, the coherent or the effective developement of the theme—all these are parts of the 'Blot,' since they may be—though they would be wrongly—abstracted from the content and regarded as separate and independent from it. The formal, decorative qualities are those which constitute the 'Blot,' and these, like the qualities of the material, are liable to be regarded as the 'Technical.'

So far the work of art has been regarded as something with a character of its own independently of its relation to anything else upon the surface of the globe. In its next aspect art must be treated as representative, and, just as for the purpose of the second division an abstraction had to be made between Form and Content, though this abstraction answers to no division in the concrete work of art itself, so now a distinction must be drawn between Art and Nature, though no distinction is so fatal as this to the proper understanding of art. Decoration, Proportion,

Harmony, or Contrast can only be appreciated in natural objects by reference to an imaginary work of art with its restrictions of scale and shape. But the objective qualities are independent of representation. They are the qualities in actual life or in external nature which the artist selects for representation for no other reason than that they are beautiful, whether in his representation or in themselves. This beauty is, as far as the artist is aware, independent of any reference to their use or goodness; the artist in his selection of the qualities as beautiful is acting solely as an artist, and not as a man among men. In painting this power of selecting, this manner of regarding, is commonly spoken of as the Plastic Sense, by which is meant an admiration of the physical without the element of physical desire. This purely aesthetic vision can be indefinitely extended in its scope: it may range from the liking for elegances and daintinesses in form or character to that for grandeur and sublimity, whether in natural object or in human act. As the artist may admire a form without desiring to possess it, so may he admire the beauty of a character or an action without approving it or saying that it is good. His emotion remains one and the same whether it is evoked by the noblest head of Zeus or the iridescence of an opal or of oil upon still water. Thus there appears to be one single artistic emotion corresponding to the third of the divisions of art, an emotion which is foreign to the mind of the ordinary man, and therefore when it is exhibited alone appears to him to be cold and unintelligible, and is immediately classed as technical. As a rule, the technical merit possessed by a work of art in which this quality alone is visible will be ascribed to the merit of the execution. The work will be praised as well drawn or well described; but good drawing, where it does not consist in either the decorative use of line or the pleasant display of the material—a sepia stroke or an etched line—lies solely in the intelligent and adequate comprehension of the object, and this is a matter which is entirely independent of aesthetic qualities or emotions.

But this analysis of technique may bring us before one aesthetic emotion, it does not introduce us to aesthetic emotions; it fails entirely to give an adequate account of art or beauty. It forbids the artist on pain of ceasing to be worthy of the name to feel any emotion except the purely aesthetic towards the object which he is representing. Yet it is in his very sensitiveness to emotions of all kinds, and his power to express his own feelings and to enter into those of others, that the central note of the artist's nature is thought to consist. Unless therefore this view is entirely false, the analysis of the work of art into the

three technical divisions is proved to be inadequate. There must be something further which is essential to the work of art, something which is implied by each and all of the other three divisions, and something greater and more important than them all.

Modern artistic theory itself supplies the omission. It has been said of Mr. Holmes's book that while it, on the one hand, declares the painter's emotion to be something foreign to that of the ordinary man, yet its greatest merit is that it makes clear the dependence of all the technical aspects of art upon the determining and underlying emotion of the painter. Material and decoration are mere means of expression; each of them has a reference to something beyond its technical justification. If what these express were merely the technical emotion which has just been described, a pure colourless aesthetic emotion, then there would be no reason for the diversity of the expressions. But it is not this emotion that is meant even by Mr. Holmes. The emotions that art expresses are the multifold and rich emotions of the living human mind, and it expresses them through the material, the decoration, and the objects proper to each art. Material shows this least clearly, since, taken by itself, it has hardly any meaning. But since each material is only capable of serving as a means towards a certain form of artistic achievement, its limitations define it in such a way as to make it appear to possess in itself a definite emotional character. Language, which owes its form to the characteristics of a people, is clearly limited in its emotional scope. Even in the same language, if it be composite, certain words are suitable for use in the expression of certain emotions; nor is this merely a matter of association, since it is the emotion that gave the word its form, the emotional trend of the popular mind that gave shape to the language. The invention of words or names by the poet himself shows this even more clearly. The whole of Maeterlinck's emotional character is embodied in the collection of vowels and consonants which forms the names of his characters, 'Maleine,' 'Pelléas,' 'Myltyl.' Similarly in painting or in drawing, the brush and the pencil call up the man—as Homer says of the sword—and, even more than the choice of the material, the method of handling, of using the brush, of putting on the paint, is determined by the emotion of the moment. But in the decorative element the ulterior reference is clear beyond dispute. Music is held by some as never legitimately passing beyond this stage, and architecture as employing it solely in subservience to practical needs. Yet these are the emotional arts *par excellence*, and the arts towards whose nature,

according to Pater, the originator of this analysis in English thought, the other arts are constantly striving. In literature and painting, decoration in its widest sense is the proper artistic means of emotional expression. Composition or emphasis is the disposition of the parts of a whole for the purpose of effectively displaying its inherent meaning, and since this meaning is emotional the disposition is controlled throughout by emotion. Colours and sounds, singly or in combination, have their immediate emotional effect; lines are as suggestive as the chords of music, and even the proportions of masses displayed within a given field have a meaning which goes far beyond their merely visual effect. Rhythm is, for the moment, the element in artistic expression which modern critics, influenced largely by Oriental art, find to be the most charged with emotional intention. Different harmonies and discords, proportions and want of proportion, rhythm and rhythmlessness have their power of suggesting moods; and their suggestions are, consciously or unconsciously, the artist's means for reproducing and communicating to others the emotion which he feels himself at the incident, action, idea, or object which he selects for representation.

In order to discover this language of expression by means of decoration and material, the artist must have an emotion to express. He does not merely spin fancy cobwebs of emotional gossamer for the pleasure of observing the intricacies and patterns of his own feelings. Something gives rise to his emotions, and this something is the third of the technical divisions, that which has been called the Object. The object alone does not make the work of art. Material by itself is a mere casual phenomenon of nature, decoration by itself a mere pattern, the object a mere record or subject of scientific study. It is the emotion inspired by the object, the attitude of the artist towards it, his nature as much as its own which makes the work of art. The trees which the painter is drawing are, in the words of Meier-Gräfe, no more the object of his art than his colours or his brushes. But without the trees even more than without his brushes he would be unable to express his emotion; and even if he expresses it by placing the trees within a decorative scheme, their appearance, as well as the decoration, is a part of the work, and takes shape according to his emotion.

Here at last we have arrived at the fourth division in the field of art, the division which is not technical. It is the true subject of art, the fact, idea, or intention which is the underlying reality of the work of art. Not the mere appearance and aptness of the materials, nor the pleasure of the decoration, nor yet the character of the object is the determining element, but

the attitude of the artist towards that object—his emotional view of it. By his emotion the artist creates the object, just as he creates his decorative representation of it; and just as his decoration expresses an emotion other than that of his joy in its mere beauty, so his representation of the object is coloured by the way in which he is affected by it. Nor is it only as a thing of beauty that it affects him and produces his attitude. It does this, no doubt, or he would not be an artist. But it affects him also as an object in the practical world of life. Thus the emotions which are expressed by art—Mr. Balfour's aesthetic emotions—prove not to be in any way apart from the practical emotions, but to be identical with them, a part of the world of truth and goodness, the sphere of morality and science.

That this truth should have been obscured is due to a multitude of causes. In the first place, insistence upon the subject of a picture—meaning by that, the object apart from the interpretation of the artist—led to an over-emphasis on the moral or the scientific character of the thing represented. A picture could only be approved on moral grounds if it represented a moral action; or it could only be recognised as valuable if it represented with accuracy the scientific aspect of the object. Moralistic and naturalistic theories of art lost sight of the central qualities in a work of art and led to a reaction. Secondly, there is, and may always have been, a conflict between the expressed morality of the age and its artistic tendencies. Emotions which are refused a practical outlet necessarily express themselves through art. The painter refuses to paint and the poet to write exactly in accordance with the precepts of the preacher; they have a different view of the values of human activities, and each busies himself in over-stating the merit of what the other finds to be detestable. Consequently art justified itself by imagining its work to lie in the field of a pure Beauty which was separate from that of Morality, and forgot that, however immoral its beauty might be, it did not thereby free itself from the bonds of morality. A still further cause for the confusion lies in the complexity of every work of art. That which is artistically valuable may be joined in nature to the artistically and morally valueless; the cause of the emotion which justifies the work of art may be an accidental quality in the object which exhibits it. So blinded may the artist be to everything but the quality which moves him that he ignores emotionally, and reproduces mechanically, the setting of that quality. Consequently, while the true aesthetic idea of the work, whether it be the display of the material, the character of the decoration, or some quality of the object, is quite in accordance with practical emotion, all the

rest may be indifferent or worse, and there may not even be a piquancy of contrast or surprise to justify the accidental juxtaposition. Finally, since it is the work of the artist to find decorative expression for his emotion, he tends, as soon as he discovers that he has more to do than merely to reproduce the external object, to regard the decoration alone as the aim of his art. Architectural and other technical requirements of the painter confirm him more strongly in this conviction, until, finally, his attitude towards the object becomes to him a matter of the least importance.

None of these reasons for dissociating the practical from the aesthetic emotions is more than a superficial confusion. The recognition of their identity is but the assertion of the unity of human nature. Insist upon abstracting beauty from goodness and art from practice, and the whole field of human activity will come rushing under either of the two heads chosen, leaving the other cold and barren. The existence of one aesthetic emotion, that of admiration for the beautiful, is paralleled, not by the existence of a multitude of practical emotions, but by that of one only, the desire for the good. If these two do not ultimately prove to coincide, yet all minor emotions, while they may appear more or less practical or more or less aesthetic according to the nature of the man who feels them, the moment at which they are felt, and, above all, the practical result of their being experienced, are all equally within the sphere of art and action. The bare feelings aroused by a colour or a sound are in themselves no more aesthetic than practical. The feeling produced by the colour yellow is as much a practical event as the taste of sugar or the pain produced by a blow. It leads to action by attraction or repulsion, just as do they ; it is based, as they are, upon physiological processes. Rising higher in the scale, the different characters of decoration have all been shown to be the expressions of practical emotions, vague and floating, no doubt, and not enough in themselves to produce action, but enough to dispose the mind in a certain attitude towards men and things, and therefore within the sphere of practice. In their most general characteristics, such as harmony and discord, proportion and disproportion, the correspondence with moral qualities is immediate. When the object is regarded and not the decoration, it is clear that such qualities as elegance, daintiness, grandeur, subtlety, nobility, openness and freedom, which are the qualities admired by the plastic sense, are merely granted to nature, animate or inanimate, by transference from the qualities of action. The unity of the human mind converts all its possessions into symbols of each other, and since for the

world of to-day the good is dominant over the beautiful, practice over art, the whole field of artistic endeavour is translated into the language of morality. At other times, as in ancient Greece, the whole of moral practice was translated into the conceptions and terms of art.

Judgements of the value of aesthetic emotions must be practical as much as, or more than, they are artistic. Art cannot make the indifferent or the bad even appear to be good or valuable. It can take the bad and clothe it in the appearance of the good; but if it does so, either the clothing is unsuitable to the wearer and the work of art is divided and is bad by its own standard, or the so-called bad is shown to be really the good. This follows from the conception of the unity of a work of art, a unity which corresponds to the unity of human nature, and is not a mere matter of external form. If the form is hostile to the content, unity is destroyed far more completely than by any apparent breach of decorative or representative fidelity, since such discords or want of correspondence with nature may be necessitated by the character of the emotion which is expressing itself. This unity is given by the emotion, which both finds for itself the appropriate decorative and symbolic dress and constructs the object in its own likeness.

By a curious twist in the evolution of modern thought a tendency is now showing itself to restore the ascendency of the practical over the aesthetic through the very causes which appeared to undermine it. The decorative element in a work of art was considered the element in which art freed itself most completely from any moral or practical connexion. The movement associated with the phrase 'Art for Art's sake' was evidently a movement in painting towards mere visual hedonism and in literature towards verbal and poetic emotionalism. It was a valuable reaction against a form of criticism in which intellectual analysis and moral consideration took the place entirely of direct emotional and aesthetic vision. Of course, it was accompanied by much frank sensuality, and thus failed to establish the truth of its main contention, that the aesthetically valuable is independent of the physically or practically attractive. But, in its theory, it was a declaration of the primary and direct value of the decorative element in the arts, and, partly through the knowledge that the subjects chosen could not bear strict investigation, but more because the subject was really thought to be unimportant, it was a pronouncement of the ascendency of decoration over the subject. The comparative disappearance of the subject appeared to be the final banishment of practical considerations. But as soon as the decoration was seen to be but the expression

of an emotion, the theory that art consists entirely in decoration changed its form. The breath of art is no longer the mere enjoyment of the decorative forms but their emotional content. Thus the value of the work of art comes to depend upon that of the emotion expressed in the decoration, and the last phase of modern aesthetic theory appears to be an endeavour to discover a new classical grand style in the purely decorative features of the art. The old theories of Greek days, which were then applied to music, the theories which forbade the use of certain harmonies because of their tendency to promote certain ways of living, would alone have led to some such conclusion as this. But these theories are much too moralistic in their tendency to receive appreciation, and the reaction has come about not through them, but paradoxically in appearance, naturally enough in reality, through the discovery of the older forms of Oriental art. The Western mind has arrived at appreciation of the Oriental forms through the purely visual attractiveness of their design. But nowhere more than in the East has the correspondence of Form and Content been investigated and employed, and nowhere has the symbolism of design been more thoroughly comprehended even to the degree of appearing exaggerated and mystic. Thus by mere attention to the decorative forms the Occidental mind has penetrated to something of the meaning which the forms express, and this is at once a great proof of the unity of art with practice and of the pervading unity of human nature.

But there is a danger that in over-emphasising the importance of decoration the value of the subject is being under-estimated. It may be true that the working artist, when he is not occupied with the mere representation of the object before him—a matter which is indifferent to aesthetic theory—is sometimes conscious solely of the decorative value of his representation and concerned only with the problem of expressing his emotion in terms of decoration. But it is equally true that in other cases the artist is concerned not only with the decoration of the object but with his imaginative creation of it, and that he is attempting not only to represent the thing he sees before him but to bring forth in its features and in its action the qualities which move him emotionally. This, too, is art, and in a representative art such as painting not the least part of it, for the emotional selection of an object is the construction of an ideal. The decorative expression of the emotion is required in order that the emotional and artistic character of the ideal may be adequately communicated to the observer, but the emotional and intellectual aspect of the ideal communicated by the character of the object cannot be dispensed with. If this were not so, the whole of painting would lie

in pattern-making, the expression and ideal representation in line and colour of emotion without reference to an object. The order of the arts may be stated, by such as care for the formal arrangement of the human faculties, in terms of their inarticulateness and directly emotional power. If that is done, music stands highest among the arts. But for the general intelligence, literature, which has the greatest power of representation and the most direct appeal to the intelligence through the emotions, stands at the head. Painting is intermediate on either arrangement, but it has, and cannot be divorced from, its intellectual content, and therefore can never be divided from the objects which it represents and the ideals which it thereby communicates.

Stress laid upon the subject of the picture leads to the most obvious invasion of art by the practical judgement. Ideals depend for their value entirely upon the degree to which they express human aspirations. The more completely the artist constructs his subject in the likeness of what men most wish it to be, the more value has his work. The more his emotion towards the subject is that of the best possible among men the greater is he among artists. So far as art is merely concerned with the expression of emotions, so far is that good art which succeeds in communicating the emotion. But all emotion is not equal in value, either artistically or from the practical point of view. Some may be individual and anti-social, insane or morbid ; others are universal and admirable. By dwelling upon the emotion itself and by comparing it with other emotions its value is not to be estimated ; nor yet is it to be weighed and judged by its decorative expression alone, since without reference to the object the decoration merely shows an emotion in the abstract, and this emotion is liable to contradiction by the object round which it has woven its decorative scheme. It is the subject which is the test of the emotion. The common trend of human thought has seized this truth when it externalises the object of art and constantly attempts to give it an independent existence apart from the mind of the artist who conceives or imagines it. The artist is judged by his creations. They and not his emotions or his attitude towards them are liked and disliked, compared and analysed with the same tendency towards realistic thought as shows itself in the ordinary outlook of a man upon the universe. There appears to be a positively good or bad apart from the mind which thinks them ; the goodness and the badness are held to reside in the thing itself. So in art, both the artist and the observer look upon his creations as having their independent existence, and he is judged both by himself and by others according as he seizes and reproduces, or imagines and constructs

the true and valuable qualities of what he sees. Here, on the side of the object, enters the element of universality which is the ultimate criterion of artistic value. The greater artist is he who exhausts most completely the whole nature of that which he is depicting, who shows not only its intelligible character and its scientific qualities, nor yet solely its characteristic features, but discovers in it all that it is capable of being, all that humanity, in its belief in its own omniscience, desires that the object should contain. This is the perfection of the subject of art, the ideal in the true sense of the word, and, since the nature of a thing does not lie in its accidents and its imperfections, but in its utmost capacity for being, this imagined perfection of art is the subject's true nature and reality.

The externalisation of the aesthetic vision which results in the emphasising of the subject does not carry with it the negation of the other elements in a work of art, but their subordination. The presentation of a moral action without the accompaniment of decorative virtues, could that be possible without preventing the presentation from communicating its moral, is not an artistic fact on this interpretation, although it may be on such a theory as Signor Croce's, which estimates artistic value by the success with which an intuition of any kind finds its expression. The emotional selection, of necessity, finds its appropriate decorative forms. They need not, of course, be decorative in the ordinary sense, that is to say, attractive, dainty, or elegant. They may be sober, simple, and restrained, and gaining their value solely by their emphasis and their proportion. But some such qualities of the visually attractive they must have, or else they are not art, but, like the multifold appearances of the daily world, mere material for artistic selection. The decorative qualities of colour and line, the so-called plastic qualities of the object, the characteristic features of the material, all enter in their place as symbols utilised in the emotional expression. Current language limits the symbolism of art to the expression of certain vague emotions which can express themselves only by means of shadowy forms, inarticulate exaggerations of pose, and tender and subtle, or crying and discordant, colours. But all art is symbolic through its use of expressive forms and harmonies, and the art which lies in the imagination of clear, noble, and universal ideals, is no less symbolic than that which conveys mysticism or morbidity. Yet the symbols in either case are still subordinate. The centre is the object, real or imaginary, which arouses, or is conceived by, the emotion of the artist and is clothed by him in symbolic forms. Each of the symbols may appeal directly and exclusively to one activity of the mind, but that activity is not alone, but is a part

of a more comprehensive whole which interprets and uses the others according to its nature. The more limited activity is subordinate to the more comprehensive, the physical to the intellectual, the body to the spirit, and the lesser emotion to the greater. This is not a question of the value of art as compared with that of practice, but of one artistic quality compared with another, of one practical activity compared with another. Art is no more than Practice a matter of sheer sensationalism ; its emotions are intellectual as well as physical, and if there is a hierarchy of practical activities and emotions there is the same hierarchy of the aesthetic, for the activities and emotions are the same.

But this subordination of activities is the exact contrary of the order in which they occur in the mind of the practising artist. He is primarily occupied with the visual and sensory expression of his emotions, as a rule only indirectly with the intellectual and practical value of his conceptions. Material and methods of handling loom so largely in the criticisms passed by one artist upon another that ' Beautiful ' in their mouth often has precisely the same significance as in the phrase ' a beautiful preparation ' employed by a man of science. The importance of the material problems of his expression varies inversely in the mind of the artist with their value in the eyes of the observer. Decoration and plastic value are more clearly the artist's business and object in life. These are his trade, and the value of his subjects is necessarily less present to his consciousness than the means by which he can express them, and, as he thinks, bring forth their beauty. If, therefore, the subordination is a true fact, it must be found to exist outside the artistic mind. It exists in the mind of the community ; it is true of the mind of society. The group of artists work, with certain exceptions, at the dictate of the practical desires of their contemporaries. Some will busy themselves with the satisfaction of the more rudimentary emotions, painting yellow pictures for those who like the colour yellow, and treating art as a form of visual cookery whose highest aim is to give animation to the palate. Others will also utilise the prevailing desire for yellow, since it is the symbolic expression of some deep-seated practical bias, but they will make use of it unconsciously, as a subordinate instrument in the expression of the general aspirations of the day. The multifold decorative and physical forms chosen by the artist will correspond with the characteristics which their contemporaries show in action, for all art is folk-art, and the general will which is based on practical motives selects its own expression and refuses an audience to the forms which are not in accordance with its practice. Thus,

whether he knows it or not, the artist is the servant of the public, and his work has value according as has their practice. There are apparent exceptions, but on analysis they serve to prove the rule. Some artists are the leaders of contemporary thought as well as the mouthpiece of their ideas of beauty. But these—and they are the greatest among artists—are men who are conscious of a practical ideal and endeavour to express it in their work, and they will be found more naturally among the artists whose material is literature, since they are less concerned with the problems of technical decoration. Even among painters it will generally be found that, instead of minimising his practical and moral importance, the working artist is only too anxious to claim his place among the preachers. But such exceptions, general and particular, apart, the greatest periods of art are those in which it held the lowest place in general estimation and when the position of the artist was infinitely of less consideration than it became in the periods when art appears to have been moribund. The reason lies in the necessary subordination of the more peculiarly technical qualities; for the great and classical power of selection, the art which finds material, colour, and subject all penetrated by the unity of one great emotion, belongs to a period when art is not free from, or to the men whose art was subject to, some large, universal, and illuminating ideal of life and action.

If there is any truth in this theory it must apply to the art of to-day as much as to the art of other periods; it must account for the success and beauty of modern art, for the achievements in which it surpasses the art of all other periods, as well as for the qualities in which it falls short of them—so far, indeed, as the limitations of contemporary vision allow us to decide on either. Modern art is too wide a field to be summed up adequately in any single generalisation. Much of it, the official and academic art of the day, is a continuation of the artistic traditions of the past, showing by its recognition as official that the tendencies which produced the classic art are still alive and powerful, but proving also by its want of inspiration and conviction that its growth is not rooted in the genuine nature of its contemporary life. Those whose ideals should be expressed by this official art find in the work of the classic masters the true expression of their desires, and they admire, if they admire at all, the modern works solely in so far as they appear to approximate to the standard set by the past. For the more characteristically modern in mind, this official art has, frankly, no existence. It makes no appeal whatever to all the activities and desires of which they are acutely conscious, because they are the qualities, superficial perhaps, but genuine, which mark them off from other

ages. It can therefore only be mentioned here in passing, but its existence must not be overlooked. There is also a vast quantity of art which appeals, with more or less vulgarity, to the interest and the appetites of mankind. This art is also a constant feature in the life of all ages. It may prove characteristic of the age if sufficiently analysed, but, on the whole, its appeal lies, like that of the art just mentioned, to the activities in human life which do not vary. Yet it, too, is art, and since it shows at once the practical nature of the so-called aesthetic emotions it must not be forgotten in this connexion. There remain two branches of modern art which are more characteristic. One is the archaistic, the art which deliberately returns, after an interval, to some form or forms which have been discarded in the history of art through the apparent resumption of their more valuable features in a more comprehensive and successful developement. The deliberate acceptance by one age of the forgotten features of another is as expressive of its nature as the invention of its own art forms. Its archaistic art, therefore, is one of the characteristic features of this age, and it falls to be considered together with the art of the few, the art of the independent and young societies, the art which is scarcely known to the multitude, but is yet that upon which any true contemporary theory must lay most stress. This is the art which takes to itself the appellation 'Modern,' as though no other art existed for the living age. It is here, if anywhere, that the correspondence with, and dependence upon, the special characteristics of modern practice will be most clearly exhibited.

Taken in its most general form modern art is the strangest compound of subtlety and simplicity, sensibility and obtuseness. The modern painter endeavours to draw like a child and to colour like a spectroscope. He reduces form to its most rudimentary expression, avoiding all modelling and attempting to seize the momentary visual characteristic of the action with one sudden and apparently careless dash of the pencil which will be at once subtle and effective. It is noticeable that as often as not he does not endeavour to eliminate his unsuccessful attempts. He leaves his missfires upon his paper in order to accentuate the successful effort when it has come and, by displaying the process, to make clear the result to which the process has led. In his colour, on the other hand, he may be tender or he may be glaring, but in either case he aims at subtlety, either that of the extremely complicated or that of a crying discord which needs the obtuseness of an over-refined eye in order to appreciate its unfamiliar beauty.

In his decoration the modern artist aims at similar effects.

He must be subtle at all costs. For the moment he may not be flowing or generous, open or spacious. Monotony broken by moments of excitement, or contortions scarcely relieved by any central stability, are his most characteristic schemes. A blank with two dots in unexpected places or a surface covered with a maze of conflicting lines would be a caricature of his method, and with all sympathy for the undeniable beauties which he achieves, it is almost impossible to describe his work in words without caricature, since his very essence lies in exaggeration. There is, at the moment, a revulsion among the modern English painters towards sheer prettiness of colour and design, and this prettiness hides the exaggeration of the general scheme. But the general features still remain observable and they are the striking harmonies and discords of the 'poster' which show themselves in the disposition of the portrait in its frame, of the features in a landscape, or of the figures in a subject group.

In his subjects, again, the modern painter is subtle either by his very obviousness or his extreme refinement. He chooses the effects of the mid-day sun upon a landscape, or the almost imperceptible gradations of tone which come upon nature through mist or the darkness of night. For his landscapes he goes into the flat country where a delicate fringe of incident separates the two wide spaces of open land and sky, or to the manufacturing towns where buildings and smoke pile themselves into masses of dramatic chaos, or to the face of a mountain which towers with overwhelming height above the level of the eye. In both landscape and portrait he may forget the country or his sitter in his attempt to represent atmospheric effect or to produce an irrelevant decorative scheme. When he does not, both portraits and landscapes are admirable observations of subtle character and incident. His most characteristic 'subjects' are those taken from the casual occasions of unprepossessing bourgeois existence, and his imaginative groups are fantastic and shadowy, brutal and heavy, distorted and violent, according as the dictates of his emotion command him.

As for the emotions of modern art they are manifold and limitless. The archaism which showed itself in a return to the artistic simplicity of the earlier Renaissance is now out of date, and that form of historical emotionalising all but dead. It is now, rather, the custom to catch a flavour of the greater periods by the reproduction of some accidental but characteristic feature of their art, such as a drawing or an unfinished torso or an architectural fragment. In that way the artist gives expression to his appreciation of the grandeur and freedom of the classic period without attempting to carry out the conception of a

monumental work, but he gives expression to this emotion indirectly by reproducing the features of the work as it appears to us with all its marks of time and age upon it, and his main feeling is not that of the original artist, but of the antiquarian in enjoyment of the flavour of antiquity. In this age of multifold experience there is a return to the art of almost every period, showing the revival of almost every expressed emotion through the medium of historical sympathy. There are returns to early Egyptian art, to the arts of savages, to medievalism of all periods, to the England of Hogarth, to the Spain of Greco or of Goya, finally to the art, denounced but yesterday by all, of the early Victorian age in England, of the so-called Biedermayer period in Germany. By entering successively into the mind of each period, regarding nature through the experience of the past, modern art tastes of a variety of emotions and expresses each with a note of reminiscence or discovery which is a proof of an indirect outlook upon life.

But archaism is a necessary note of all new departures in art. In reproducing the characteristic aroma of every preceding epoch, modern art is only showing the multitude of its departures from the constant tradition of the past. At the same time it has added from its own store of experience a mass of new emotions, of new subjects and new decorative forms to the artistic treasure of the ages. Its success lies in its exquisite sensibility to the beauty of minor and generally disregarded accidents and effects of life and nature; it is at its best when calling attention to the virtue which can be found in faces which are not of the conventional mould or landscapes which bygone poets would have condemned or forms which the Greek would have passed by in horror. Modern art invests these with their own beauty, not adding to them a conventional attractiveness which fails to fit them, but extracting from them just the quality which they alone possess. In its sensibility to subtle effects of colour, modern art presents a parallelism with the sensibility to form which was exhibited by the art which it replaces. The prismatic portrayal of sunlight upon a hayrick is the direct counterpart of the patient and minute representation of a flower, an insect or an object of the household. In these performances modern art is successful. So, too, in its decoration modern art is happy when its scope is small. Its efforts can be compared with the invention of head-pieces and colophons, of initials or borders, in medieval manuscripts or early printed books. A variety of minor emotions are displayed with exquisite fancy, and these are not necessarily the emotions of earlier ages but those of the modern mind. Wherever the

emotion is delicate or uncommon modern art gives it perfect expression. But all this is rarefied and small. It is but a fragment of life that is represented in each work of art; a fragment which is touching or thrilling or fascinating, but still only a small part of the life which is lived by man. Herein modern art is the counterpart of modern practice. Rarity and exquisiteness of experience, curiosity and the search after emotions for their own sake, a lack of all sense of proportion except such as is given by the sensation of the moment, want of a definite standard of value and a dislike of all that is so universal as to appear commonplace: these are the characteristics of the moment, and they are the features of its art.

It is, however, when modern art attempts tasks greater than these that its characteristics become at once most apparent and most clearly dictated by modern practice. When it attempts the larger subjects the inadequateness of its vision and the lack of universality in its view show themselves in nakedness. In the sphere of smaller things it treats the fragment wholly, in the larger it treats the whole fragmentarily. In its attempted simplification it catches a single aspect at the expense of a hundred others. It selects for representation some moment which exhibits perfectly a single aspect, it leaves the object almost unrecognisable to those who know it in other phases. Searching for effects of light upon the surface, it deliberately refuses even to suggest the form below. When it tries to present a certain feature of form, all the others disappear. Hence it harks back to the methods of primitive art in which the ignorance of the workman allowed him to distort and to indicate without interest the features which he had not learnt to comprehend. Over-emphasis of a subtle quality, over-refinement of a special feature, finally crude exaggeration of the untypical take the place of general understanding. Modern art scouts as scientific naturalism all attempt to reproduce the full nature of the object represented, forgetting that while the vision of the normal man may fail to give artistic quality, the full ideal of that which is represented is not only the sum of all that the artist can extract and emphasise in each aspect but is also the sum of all the parts shown in the proportion in which they appear to the universal mind of humanity.

It was not in this way that the classic artist worked. Controlled by a definite purpose, he selected the entire conception of his work, chose figure, grouping, incident, colour, light and shade, and wove them all together into the consistent expression of his emotion. Where the modern artist sets down what he discovers to be admirable, suppressing by distortion or including with

indifference all the concomitants that he happens to discover with it, the classical master would have made a note of the admirable feature, and he would have waited patiently until he found its appropriate setting. Thus he reserved the beauty which he might discover with a foul face until the fitting face was found for it; he reserved the feature until its fellows appeared to his eye or his imagination. He set aside his draperies and his accessories, his landscape and his atmosphere, until he had constructed or discovered the centre round which they might be placed. Thus nothing was left otiose or discordant, and nothing was omitted which might prevent the whole from appearing sufficient and convincing, an ideal of universal experience. What modern art can produce in the sphere of minor emotions, classic art could symbolise for the great; and the unity and universality which is now given to the subjects of lesser importance were given by classic art to the greater.

Of course the power of selection in the art of the great masters was not the work of one man. It took generations of patient achievement, of successive rise and decay, before the appropriate symbols were found for the greater ideas. Over and over again painters faced the same subjects, each adding his quota of individual experience to the already considerable achievement, until the period came when one man or more could sum up their successive endeavours in free and comprehensive works. Possibly in each of these generations men were more conscious of individual differences and less aware of the general tendency than can appear to us now to have been the case, and this consideration is a warning against any condemnation of the present. But the characteristic feature of this progression is that the selection was dominated by a general purpose and a single ideal. To the artist himself no doubt this appeared an ideal of beauty only, but its force and its centripetal power lay in the fact that it was an ideal of action which contemporary life demanded from its art. The singleness and universality of the selecting emotion were due to its general strength in the mind of the day. It forbade the artist to trespass in other fields and recalled him from the excursions to which the decaying mannerisms of each generation were prone, accepted his contributions in the selection of different symbols, and finally produced a creation satisfactory to its whole nature. To-day such a general ideal of life and action is wanting. Art, therefore, weakens in its attempt to keep alive the ideals of the past and throws itself with all its force into obvious imperfections and exaggerations from which there is no universal faith or reason to restrain it.

It is no wonder with art and life in this condition that theorists can find them separate and independent. Practical considerations are obviously in disaccord with aesthetic experience; each goes its own way. Art has become the property of the artistic, and while these are far more cultured and intelligent as critics of technique, perhaps, too, more sensitive to the power of decoration than was the earlier English public, they are either an isolated group in the busy world of action or thought, or they keep their art in a corner of their lives, untouched by, and without influence upon, their daily actions. If modern art is brought into connexion with life it is in sporadic attempts to bring the life into accord with the art, as an exquisite unity of half-tones and subtle emotions or as a flagrant outburst of uncontrolled extravagance. But if it be accepted that the aesthetic and the practical emotions are identical, nothing but good can come to art through allowing the man of action to criticise from his own practice and experience. Art is to be judged, not from the standpoint of the artist, but by its effect upon the observer and its relation to his life. Past ideals in art and in life are proving insufficient. Modern art, like modern life, must not be judged by the precise forms and characters of earlier periods. Each of these, however great, omitted much, deliberately rejected much which is now found to have value. This is the truth which justifies the modern rebellion against formulated rules and ideals, for these have been found to be too narrow, and it is the truth which justifies the departures of modern art, since they are in accordance with departures in modern practice. But the classic art of the past, like the practice of the past, still has value, or it would not have survived, however weakly, in the art of the present day; and, above all, this value lies in its appearance of universality. To restore this universality art must seek the co-operation of action, for great art does not depend upon the experience and ideals of one man, busied with their technical expression, but upon the dominating experience and ideals of all. Ideals may be imperfect, but the need of them is inborn in man and is the justification of art. Neither those of art nor those of action are strengthened by their theoretic dissociation which is the fallacy of Mr. Balfour's position. The solution of his dilemma is to accept the evidence of art as an aid in the discovery of practical values. If art is to express the keynote of life it will be by expressing in concrete form the universal unity of human aspiration, and the future of art will be, not, as it appears in Mr. Holmes's last chapter, a matter of the decorative opportunities which forthcoming generations will afford to artists, but the epitome and visual expression of all that man has yet to learn and value.

Art. V.—A CENTURY OF SCOTTISH LIFE.

1. *Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character.* By Dean Ramsay. Edinburgh: T. N. Foulis. 1909.
2. *Memorials of his Time.* By Lord Cockburn. Edinburgh: T. N. Foulis. 1909.
3. *Journal of Henry Cockburn*, 1831–1854. Being a continuation of 'Memorials of his Time.' 2 vols. Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas. 1874.
4. *Life of Lord Jeffrey.* By Henry Cockburn. 2 vols. Edinburgh: A. and C. Black. 1852.
5. *Circuit Journeys.* By Henry Cockburn. Edinburgh: David Douglas. 1889.
6. *History of Scotland.* By P. Hume Brown. Vol. III. Cambridge University Press. 1909.
7. *A Century of Scottish History.* By Sir Henry Craik. 2 vols. London: Blackwood. 1901.
8. *Life and Letters of Robert Rainy, D.D.* By P. Carnegie Simpson. 2 vols. London: Hodder and Stoughton. 1909.

Scotland has never been wanting in writers to whom their native land—her poetry, her traditions, the quaint and romantic by-ways of her history—has been an inspiration. The conditions of society, the strong sense of kinship, and the comparatively scanty population of the northern kingdom gave these writers a national rather than a local reputation. Instead of being regarded, as would have been the case in England, as antiquarians of a country-side, the chroniclers of a district or a county, they took rank—and deservedly—as delineators of national life and manners, and were claimed not by a province but by the country as a whole. Incomparably the first among them stands Walter Scott, to whom more than to any one man we owe it that the Scotland of the past lives in the memory and the heart of the Scotland of the present. But, though the first, he is far from being the only representative of the type. The republication of the two works which stand at the head of our list recall names that were familiar enough a generation ago. Many now living knew Dean Ramsay: the tolerant and large-hearted Churchman, the enlightened lover of his country, the welcome guest in every Scottish home. Lord Cockburn takes us further back. His life (1779–1854) covered an important period of Scottish history, a period whose leading men he knew inti-

mately, and in which he played an honourable part. The experience of a man who had seen Braxfield and Eskgrove, who had been a Whig when to be a Whig meant professional and often social ostracism, and a Reformer when to be a Reformer was to be within measurable distance of transportation, was exceptional; and to this experience he added a singular gift of narrative—he was a born *raconteur*. From the first the 'Memorials,' published two years after his death, took rank as a classic. This was due at once to their merit and to the regard in which the writer was held by his countrymen without distinction of party; in the words of a writer in this Review,* 'He was one of the most popular men north of the Tweed.' A few may still recall the attack—there was but one—made on the book by Brougham in the 'Law Magazine,'† and its exposure by Alexander Russel, of the 'Scotsman.' Cockburn's estimate of the ex-Chancellor is to be found in a masterly character-sketch, recorded in the 'Journal,'‡ in which his intellectual excellencies are brought into strong and effective contrast with his moral faults. If this estimate was known, as in substance it probably was, to its subject, his resentment is not surprising; and the disingenuous manner in which he betrayed it is characteristic of the man.

Associated by family ties with the old, by conviction and sympathy with the new, order, Cockburn had a foot in each of the sharply conflicting camps. How far the two stood apart it is difficult now to realize. The key to the situation, as is generally the case, was economic. In little more than a generation the country had passed from the feudal and patriarchal into the industrial stage. Its institutions had not shared in this development; hence the conflict. While adapted to, or at least tolerable under, the old social system, they had become an anachronism in the new. So obviously was this the case that, till the disturbing element introduced by the French Revolution, it was scarcely matter of controversy; in his youth Dundas, like Pitt, had dallied with Reform. Representative government had become a farce; Horsley's *dictum* that the only concern the people had with the laws was to obey them was the reflection of a fact. In former times this had been in some sort a nominal grievance. A nation in arms is independent of the franchise; the sword is more efficient than the vote. Even as things were, the successful protest against Dundas's Bill for the relief of Catholic disabilities (1778) showed that a people under the influence of

* January 1857. † 1856.

‡ Journal, i. 195 ff.

passion can assert itself without representation. But the agitation which is a condition of a protest of this sort cannot be started at will; there is much useful legislation in behalf of which it is impossible, and would be undesirable were it possible, to enlist it. For a modern industrial community a reasonable franchise is an essential; only by its means can the citizens, now unarmed and unwarlike, give effect to their will. The existing system was superannuated. The life that had created it was dead; the need of institutions corresponding to the actual life of the nation became more urgent year by year.

It was this survival of the unfit that made the Dundas despotism possible. It was not generally unpopular, and it would be unjust to attach the odium associated with it by a later generation to any one man. Dundas was an effect, not a cause. Had he not come to the front his place would have been taken by another, and absolutism might have found many a worse representative. 'He was the very man for Scotland at 'the time; and is a Scotsman of whom his country may be 'proud,' * says Cockburn, who was his nephew by marriage. It is unreasonable to blame him for circumstances which were none of his making. He played the cards dealt him (for their quality he was not responsible) as best he could. His Whig leanings, like those of his great leader, were short-lived; but the tie between the two remained unbroken till Pitt's death. Each was necessary to the other. Without Pitt Dundas could not have governed Scotland; and without Dundas's one-man rule in Scotland it is improbable that Pitt could have retained power throughout those perilous times. But for the all but unbroken phalanx of ministerialists returned by the Scottish constituencies the map of Europe might have been other than it is to-day. To bring about this return was Dundas's work. Like Walpole, whom in many respects he resembled, he did it by patronage—it might be said by corruption; it could be done in no other way. The small scale of the electorate made it accessible to the influences which he had at command. He was 'the Pharos of Scotland. 'Who steered upon him was safe; who disregarded his light was 'wrecked. It was to his nod that every man owed what he had 'got and looked for what he wished.' † He was always at the head of some great department of the public service, and had the indirect command of places in every other: in the Army, the Navy, the Church, the Law, the Civil Service at home and abroad, especially in India, which he peopled with Scotsmen, his word was law. The system which he administered was odious, but he

* Memorials, p. 203. † Memorials, p. 201.

did not create it. Nor, had he desired to do so, could he have altered it; the people at large wished for no change. He represented, as did George III, the general sense of the country: it was the Government, not the Reformers, that stood for the average man. The statesman interprets, the politician reflects, opinion. Neither the King nor Dundas were statesmen; but as politicians—and the time called for politicians—they stood high. He repressed the seeds of reform and their disseminators high-handedly enough; but the seeds were scanty and their would-be disseminators few.

'There was then in this country no popular representation, no emancipated burghs, no effective rival of the Established Church, no independent press, no free public meetings, and no better trial by jury even in political cases (except high treason) than what was consistent with the fact that the jurors were not sent into court under any impartial rule, and that when in court those who were to try the case were named by the presiding judge. The Scotch representation was only forty-five, of whom thirty were elected for counties and fifteen for towns. Both from its price and its nature (being enveloped in feudal and technical absurdities) the elective franchise in the counties, where alone it existed, was far above the reach of the whole lower, of a great majority of the middle, and of many even of the higher ranks. There were probably not above 1500 or 2000 county electors in all Scotland [Mr. Hume Brown gives the number in 1788 as 4652], a body not too large to be held, hope included, in Government's hand. The return, therefore, of a single Opposition member was never to be expected. A large estate might have no vote; and there were hundreds of votes which, except nominally, implied no estate. Of the fifteen town members Edinburgh returned one. The other fourteen were produced by clusters of four or five unconnected burghs electing each one delegate, and their four or five delegates electing the representative. Whatever this system may have been originally, it had grown, in reference to the people, into as complete a mockery as if it had been invented for their degradation. The people had nothing to do with it. It was all managed by the town councils; and every town council was self-elected, and consequently perpetuated its own interests. The election of either the town or the county member was a matter of such utter indifference to the people that they only knew of it by the ringing of a bell, or by seeing it next day in a newspaper; for the farce was generally performed in an apartment from which, if convenient, the public could be excluded, and never in the open air. . . . Politically Scotland was dead. It was not unlike a village outside a great man's gate. Without a single free institution or habit, opposition was rebellion, submission probable success.' *

* Life of Jeffrey, i. 74.

The tide of events, however, and the spirit of the age were moving in the direction of change; and had the sober, practical philosophy of the eighteenth century continued to rule men's minds, reform would have been inevitable. The turn taken by events in France produced a violent reaction, and put the clock of European progress in politics and in religion back a century. Braxfield laid it down from the bench as a proposition requiring no proof that 'the British constitution was the best that had 'ever been since the creation of the world, and that it was not 'possible to make it better.' 'His Lordship had never liked the 'French, and now he detested them,' we read in the report of his charge in a sedition case. We smile: but ineptitudes of this kind were no smiling matter. The courts translated words into action; absurdity passed over into crime. To advocate the most trifling reform was to be a Jacobin, a term with which the mind of the age, judicial and general, associated the September massacres, the pike and the guillotine. This is the key to the misdemeanours of the Bench of the time. That so amiable a man as Dundas should have been their apologist is an anomaly. It is probable that his responsibility was *ex post facto*, and that he found the judges embarrassing allies. But he could not afford to disavow them: as generally happens in revolutionary times, the extremists had their way. Moderate men in or out of office followed the line of least resistance, and swam with the tide. The Toryism of the period was based on panic: the same passion which inspired the atrocities of the Terror produced the savage policy of repression adopted by the party of order here. The motives at work were material; in Scotland at least historical and constitutional Toryism was rare. Dundas held office under Rockingham and Shelburne as well as under North; he was an opportunist rather than a theorist or a doctrinaire. But personal advantage lies nearer most men's hearts than principle; when property and life are, or are believed to be, in danger the most humdrum citizen will go far. Given this state of mind, it is perhaps matter for surprise that the severities of the Government were not greater than they were. They were, however, savage enough. Fear deprived men, in general kindly and reasonable, of balance and sense. The most incredible stories found credence. As a boy Cockburn heard such tales at his father's table.

'If the ladies and gentlemen who formed our society believed all they said about the horrors of French bloodshed, and of the anxiety of people here to imitate them, they must have been wretched indeed. Their talk sent me to bed shuddering. How they raved! What sentiments! What principles! I was terrified out of such

wits that they left me at the idea of bloodshed, and it never occurred to me that it could be avoided. My reason no sooner began to open, and to get some fair play, than the distressing wisdom of my ancestors began to fade; and the more attractive sense that I met with among the young men into whose company our debating societies threw me gradually hardened me into what I became—whatever this was!' *

'We were a' mad, Sir,' said Francis Horner's father, when reminded in later years that he had been one of the jury that convicted Muir.

Modern analogies suggest themselves, though the change of manners forbids the invasion of the courts and the legislature by party spirit to the extent that was then possible. Our own time is under the influence of a wave—a passing wave, we may believe, of practical materialism which, intent on the accumulation and preservation of wealth, and on the maintenance of the existing social order, has substituted Socialism for what a hundred years ago was called Jacobinism as the object of its fears. We no longer imagine, with the alderman, that we shall wake with our throats cut; our panic is directed to property rather than life or limb. Before we know where we are, we shall discover, it is thought, that in consequence of Socialistic legislation and taxation, our pockets have been emptied, our industries paralysed, our trade ruined. The conditions of human nature, of English human nature in particular, and of society make it difficult to conceive Socialism at work as a system: but, disastrous as would be the attempt to establish it, the fear with which it inspires us may be carried to such an extent as to blind and mislead. It was so with the kindred fears entertained by our forefathers. It was simply not true that 'French principles' were prevalent in Scotland at the end of the eighteenth century: those who were supposed to entertain them aimed, with few exceptions, at no more than a moderate and necessary measure of parliamentary reform. Though there is much legitimate discontent with existing conditions, there is little systematic Socialism to-day among the working classes. Such as exists is to be found in academic and journalistic coteries, and commends itself rather to second-rate men of letters than to working men. The grievances of the latter are concrete: ideal constructions are foreign to the British mind, which is apt to think, with Johnson, that laws are more powerless than they really are to remedy 'the ills that human kind endure.' For the rest, 'We 'are all Socialists now,' said a genial statesman a few years ago.

* Memorials, pp. 42-3.

That is, we do not regard it as a conclusive argument against a proposed change that it calls into play social rather than individual activities ; nor do we, most of us, think it improbable that many undertakings now left to private enterprise may in time to come be taken in hand by the community. This has been the case to a great extent with education, water supply, electricity, lighting, tramways, &c. ; and common action of the kind may be indefinitely extended. The question between private and public initiative is one of practice not of principle : which, we ask in any given case, works best ?

The mind of a century back was less speculative, and more elemental. Braxfield, R. L. Stevenson's 'Weir of Hermiston,' embodied it at its most brutal. Cockburn's description of him makes him live.

' His very name makes people start yet. Strong built and dark, with rough eyebrows, powerful eyes, threatening lips, and a low growling voice, he was like a formidable blacksmith. Thousands of his sayings have been preserved, and the staple of them is indecency : he shocked the feelings even of an age which, with more of the formality, had far less of the substance of decorum than our own. His union of talent with a passion for rude predomination, exercised in a very discretionary court, tended to form a formidable and dangerous judicial character. This appeared too often in ordinary cases. But all stains on the administration of the common business of his court disappear in the indelible iniquity of the political trials of 1793 and 1794. In these he was the Jeffreys of Scotland. It is impossible to condemn his conduct as a judge too gravely or too severely. . . . To find a match for the judicial spirit of the court at this period, we must go back to the days of Lauderdale and Dalziel.' *

The Scottish law of sedition was at once more severe and more widely interpreted than the English. The court had a discretionary power with regard to the sentence, which might be anything from a merely nominal penalty up to transportation. This discretion was exercised mercilessly, and language was brought under the head of sedition which in England would not have been regarded as a legal offence at all. Sir Henry Craik admits that, in the notorious case of Thomas Muir, there was ' nothing very extreme or dangerous ' in his words as reported at the trial. But ' he had made himself obnoxious to those whose ' nerves were not unreasonably shaken by the events going on in ' Paris ; ' † and as a result of this panic, after a trial which was

* Memorials, p. 104 ff.

† A Century of Scottish History, ii. 150.

'a travesty of justice,' he was sentenced to fourteen years transportation. Eskgrove, who succeeded Braxfield as Lord Justice-Clerk in 1799, added an element of broad farce to the administration of justice. 'A more ludicrous person could not 'exist. People seemed to have nothing to do but to tell stories 'of this one man.' A few bear repetition. He had to condemn two or three persons to death—a performance in which he rarely failed to distinguish himself—who had broken into a house at Luss, assaulted Sir James Colquhoun and others, and robbed them of a considerable sum of money.

'He first, as was his almost constant practice, explained the nature of the various crimes, assault, robbery, and hamesucken—of which last he gave them the etymology; he then reminded them that they had attacked the house and its inmates, and robbed them —and then came to the climax: "All this ye did, and God preserve us! joost when they were sitten doon to their denners!"'

On another occasion a lady of great beauty, Miss Forbes of Culloden, was called as a witness. She came into the court veiled. Before administering the oath Eskgrove gave her this exposition of her duty: 'Young woman! You will now consider 'yourself in the presence of Almighty God and of this High Court. 'Lift up your veil; throw off all modesty, and look me in the 'face!'

Another light of the bench whose name should not be passed over was Hermand (George Fergusson). A man of a very different type from that of either Braxfield or Eskgrove, he was a gentleman of the old school, generous, humane, and courteous. But his eccentricities passed belief. He was famous for his piety and for his potations, both of which were profound. A prominent speaker in the General Assembly, he was a pillar of orthodoxy. He had no difficulty, he proclaimed, in conceiving a world where three and three were not six; he spoke with expert knowledge of the mysteries of the Deity, whose Being and attributes (he assured the astonished fathers) he had 'sucked in with his 'mother's milk.' Arguing, in the Leslie case, that a man should hold to the religious opinion of his fathers, he pressed his contention home by an illustration: 'I hate a sceptic; but, 'oh, Moderator, I love a Turk!' Brutality disgusted him. Kames's 'There's checkmate for you, Matty,' said, in an audible aside, in pronouncing the capital sentence on a smuggler with whom he had been accustomed to play chess, provoked from him the protest, 'If I had had a pistol in my hand, I would 'have shot him where he sat.' And, on a diminutive midshipman, who had accidentally killed an assailant twice his size in a street

row at Greenock, being charged before him with murder, he indignantly refused to 'try a child.' He was no respecter of persons. When Scott, the future Lord Eldon, was at the height of his reputation he and Fergusson were counsel in an appeal on a Scotch entail case in the House of Lords. Unversed in the mysteries of the Scots law, Scott rehearsed his intended speech to his colleague, and asked him if it would do. 'Do, Sir?' was the answer. 'It is delightful, absolutely delightful. I could 'listen to it for ever. It is so beautifully written, and so beauti-'fully read. But, Sir, it's the greatest nonsense. It may do 'very well for an English Chancellor: but it would disgrace a 'clerk with us.' A saying which more than one Scottish lawyer recalled on the occasion of the judgment of the House of Lords in the historic Church case of 1904. He combined—and in those days it was a rare combination—strong Tory principles with stronger Whig friendships: and the conviviality for which he was famous must be judged by the standards of his own, not of our, time.

'With Hermand drinking was a virtue. No carouse ever injured his health (for he was never ill) or impaired his taste for home and quiet, or muddled his head. He slept the sounder for it, and rose the earlier and the cooler. The cordiality inspired by claret and punch was felt by him as so congenial to right thinking that he was confident he could convert the Pope himself, if he could only get him to sup with him.' *

Would that theological controversies could be so easily and so felicitously solved! Drunkenness, for him, was not indecorum. he held it rather an aggravation than an excuse for misconduct. 'We are told that the panel was in liquor,' was his reply to a counsel who urged the fact as an extenuating circumstance. 'Good God, my Laards, if he will do this when he's drunk, what 'will he not do when he's sober?' At a famous Western circuit, where he was judge and Clephane advocate-depute, the party got drunk at Ayr, and so continued till the business was concluded at Jedburgh; but not a man of the party, so Dean Ramsay was assured by one who had been a member of it, was unfitted for his work. His characteristics, like those of many of his colleagues, could not be reproduced under the changed conditions of society; we live in a more level age.

This levelling comes with industrialism: trade removes barriers, and gives a cosmopolitan colour to life. The latter years of the eighteenth century and the first decades of the

* Memorials, p. 123.

nineteenth saw what was practically the creation of Scottish industries. Between 1730 and 1770 the value of the linen produced in the country multiplied sixfold : in 1760 the Carron Iron Works, which gave employment to 1,200 men, were founded. Agriculture shared in the general progress. Leases, enclosures, the rotation of crops, the application of lime to the soil became common : better implements came into use ; landed proprietors, not always to their profit, took up farming as a hobby ; the prosperity of the country went up by leaps and bounds. Means of communication were improved as trade developed. The Forth and Clyde Canal was completed in 1799 ; shortly before this the Clyde at Glasgow was deepened, the result being that the city became a flourishing port. Bridges were built ; the country was opened up to wheel traffic ; there was no better road in the island than that between Edinburgh and Perth. For the Highlands Johnson's 'Tour in the Hebrides' is an invaluable source. 'There was, perhaps, never any change of manners so quick, so great and so general,' writes this shrewd observer, 'as that which has operated in the Highlands by the 'last conquest and subsequent laws.' When the hereditary jurisdictions were abolished, the chiefs became landlords, and adapted themselves too easily to their new rôle. That rents, which had hitherto been calculated rather on a feudal than an economic basis, should rise was inevitable. The value of land had increased—it might almost be said had been created. Before it was seldom in the market and scarcely ranked as a commodity ; now it commanded a ready sale—in the southern counties at thirty years' purchase, in the northern at a lower but a high and rapidly rising price. But the precipitation with which many of the proprietors acted injured at once their own interests and those of the people at large. To make haste to be rich is bad policy ; in Pennant's phrase, they attempted 'to empty the bag before it was filled.' Between 1763 and 1775 above 30,000 Highlanders emigrated, besides those who helped to swell the population of the Lowland towns. Those who were left behind enlisted in increasing numbers ; between 1740 and 1818 more than fifty battalions were raised. The Highland Society, founded in 1784, while keeping clear of the sectional tendencies which give a certain air of unreality to the modern Celtic movement, did much not only to develope the industries of the country but to preserve its language, music, and poetry. The repeal of the prohibition of the Highland dress (1782) and the Act restoring to the heirs of the original owners the estates forfeited in the '45 and subsequently transferred to the Crown, were concessions to legitimate national sentiment ; while, to turn to the Lowlands,

the emancipation of colliers and salters, not wholly effected till 1799, removed a relic of barbarism from the statute book and from the national life.

The dominant party had abjured letters, which, like laws, are silent in the clash of arms. But, in the long run, literature is justified of her children: those that honour her she honours, but those that despise her are lightly esteemed. The foundation of the EDINBURGH REVIEW marked an epoch. Cockburn, a valued if not a very frequent contributor, echoed the general judgment of competent persons in his high estimate of its services to civilisation and good government. He saw in it a pillar of fire; its first flash, he tells us, electrified the country; 'power 'awoke to alarm and indignation, the people to knowledge and 'hope.' * A writer of our own generation characterises this as 'grotesque in its exaggeration'; and damns with faint praise the easy dialectic, the crude rationalism of 'dapper critics 'wrapped in the conviction of their own infallibility,' and the 'facile latitudinarianism that had masqueraded as free-thought 'for a generation past.'

'Phases of thought which were alien to their own; depths of speculation which they could not fathom; flights of imagination which were beyond their ken—above all a type of poetical creation which they never learned to appreciate—all these were treated with a smart and attractive sarcasm, and made the butt of perfectly self-satisfied ridicule, which mistook itself for wit. This pleased a wide class in a generation which was active-minded, alert, and fairly educated, but where profound intellectual power and wide scholarship were rare.' †

This, it seems to us, is to attribute certain general tendencies of a period to a party with which the writer is not in sympathy. As a criticism of the standpoint of the first half of the nineteenth century it is not without justification: though this standpoint, it must be remembered, was the highest then occupied; contemporary opponents criticising it from a lower, not a higher level—Noodle's oration is scarcely a caricature of the Toryism of the time. The thinness of texture referred to was not peculiar to the Reformers. The 'Quarterly' on Keats was no less Philistine than the 'Edinburgh' on Wordsworth. It is unreasonable to blame Jeffrey and his colleagues for defects which they shared with the ablest men of their day, irrespective of party politics, the causes of which lay not in individuals, but in the age. The generation to whose lot it falls to throw off the

* Journal, ii. 256. † A Century of Scottish History, ii. 260.

bondage of the past can seldom give the past its full value. That the first 'Edinburgh Reviewers' stood too near the old Scotland to see it in a true perspective is probable enough. The romance of the world which it was theirs to combat lay far back. As things were, it was simply an encumbrance—an abomination of desolation standing where it ought not: the imperative call was for clearance and fresh air.

It is strange to-day to look back to a time when the 'Scotsman' was a Liberal organ, and to remember that on its first appearance (1817) its reputation for advanced views was such that prudent business men subscribed to it, and had it sent to them, privately, through their clerks, in order not to offend their clients. The local press was abject: no Edinburgh paper could be found independent enough to expose an abuse, however flagrant, if in doing so there was the slightest chance of giving offence in high quarters. It was the refusal of the public prints to publish a statement as to the mismanagement of the Royal Infirmary which led Charles Maclaren to bring out the now famous daily, which was in journalism what the EDINBURGH REVIEW was in the larger field of literary and political criticism. The most distinguished name connected with it is that of the late Alexander Russel, editor 1849–76. The same year which saw the birth of the 'Scotsman' saw also that of Blackwood's 'Edinburgh 'Magazine.' It was the mouthpiece of a brilliant and boisterous Toryism. 'In this department,'* says Cockburn, 'it has 'adhered with respectable constancy to all the follies it was meant 'to defend. It is a great depository of exploded principles; 'and indeed will soon be valuable as a museum of old errors.' That the friends of the old order should have regarded with dismay the advance of their opponents both in number and consideration was natural. Official influence was on one side; talent and popularity on the other: with the exception of Scott and, perhaps, Wilson, there was scarcely a man whose name carried weight in the country who was not a Whig. The Tory stalwarts took as their motto, 'no case: abuse the plaintiff's 'attorney.' They had no case; and personality of a singularly offensive type was their main weapon. Lockhart speaks of 'those 'jeux d'esprit by which Blackwood's young Tory wags delighted 'to assail their elders and betters of the Whig persuasion.'† This meant that respectable characters were wilfully and systematically slandered. The heads of the party—history repeats itself—were, or pretended to be, embarrassed. Scott spoke of the magazine as 'the mother of mischief'; and Mrs. Grant of Laggan expressed a hope that its contributors feared God, as they

* Memorials, p. 303. † Life of Scott, iv. 109.

certainly did not regard man. The most odious form that their policy took was the charge of hostility to religion persistently brought against political opponents. Such charges—the Bradlaugh case is an example, and there have been others less remote—even when made by persons whose irreligion is notorious and whose motives are patent, carry weight with the vulgar; the mud sticks. The 'Beacon' (1821) and the 'Sentinel,' which succeeded it, became simply scurrilous. The former was within measurable distance of involving Scott in a duel—'a more 'pitiable mass of blunders and imbecility was never heaped 'together,' says Lockhart: the latter caused the fatal meeting between Sir Alexander Boswell and Stuart of Dunearn. Scott's attitude in these controversies, in which it is regrettable that he should have been involved, was ambiguous. It would be as unreasonable to judge him from the standpoint of party politics as it would Wellington: the greatness of each lay in another field. He was the one great man in the ranks of the Tories, and it was natural that they should play him as their trump card. He brought into their party warfare, which too often degenerated into a faction fight, the same idealism which led him to pocket, and subsequently to sit down upon, the glass out of which George IV. had drunk. His high spirits led him at times into what even then were regarded as grave breaches of decorum; his unhappy 'Tally-ho to the Fox,' sung at the Melville banquet when the great Whig statesman's death was hourly expected gave deep and reasonable offence. With regard to the young bloods of the party whose excesses have been touched upon, his conduct was that of Eli. 'His sons made themselves vile, and he 'restrained them not.' He could have checked them by a word; but the word remained unspoken. That in this he acted against his better judgment is certain. In the affair of the 'Beacon' his comment was 'Our friends went into the thing like fools, and 'have come out of it very like cowards. I never was so sick of a 'transaction in my life.' And he was too shrewd not to see how things were going. 'When burgh reform comes,' he wrote in 1826, 'and it cannot perhaps be long delayed, ministers will not 'return a single member for Scotland from the towns. The gentry 'will abide longer by sound principles; for they are needy and 'desire advancement for their sons—appointments and so on. 'But this is a very hollow dependency.' These were not the sentiments of a fanatic. And his political principles did not interfere with his private friendships.

'Why is it that when I am with a party of my Opposition friends the day is often merrier than when with our own set? Is it because

they are cleverer? Jeffrey and Harry Cockburn are, to be sure, very extraordinary men, yet it is not owing to that entirely. I believe both parties meet with a feeling of novelty.' *

The peculiar quality of the life of the time was raciness. Social distinctions were too clear and too universally recognised, individual characteristics too strongly marked, to make pretence, social or personal, possible. What men and women were was known to the little world in which they moved: assumption and make-belief were unknown; people were not afraid to be themselves. What reader of Dean Ramsay can forget his inimitable spinsters? Settling generally in the county town, within reach of their family home—Montrose was a favourite centre—they exercised an undisputed sway over their non-territorial neighbours, by whom they were much respected and not a little feared. The comment made by one of the sisterhood on being told that the eldest son of a certain Baillie was to be married is worth recording: 'And pray, fa' ever heard o' a merchant i' the town 'o' Montrose ha'in' an eldest son?' Their means were of the smallest; their sense was of the strongest; and their economies, which they made no attempt to conceal, were such as to raise a smile from a generation less Spartan or more self-conscious. 'Wha's for chicken? I'm for nane. Tammas, tak' thae birds awa',' was the order given by one of them to her ancient servingman when a new dish made its appearance at the end of what she judged a sufficiently plentiful meal. Nor was it only the spinsters of the time who were memorable. Of Mrs. Robert Dundas, the mother of the well-known commander, 'she interspersed her 'studies and her days,' we read, 'with much laughter and not a 'little sarcasm.'

'What a spirit! There was more fun and sense round that chair than in the theatre or the church. I remember one of her granddaughters stumbling, in the course of reading the newspaper to her, on a paragraph which stated that a lady's reputation had suffered from some indiscreet talk on the part of the Prince of Wales (George IV.). Up she of fourscore sat, and with an indignant shake of her shrivelled fist, and a keen voice, "the dawmed villain! Does he kiss and tell?"' †

A distinct flavour of this old world raciness survived to our own time, and, it is to be hoped, still survives. The peroration of a village sermon on the enemy of mankind preached in this present century deserves quotation—'Dinna let him catch ye, or 'sure as deeth he'll stick to ye—like a mad bullock chairging on

* Scott's Journal, Dec. 9, 1826. † Memorials, p. 53.

'a haystack, or a desolate mither looking for her lang lost bairn.' Nor is it only in country life that such colour lingers. In Carlyle, in Norman Macleod, in Dr. John Brown (Rab), in Professor Blackie, the Scotsman was of their inmost fibre; in others, such as Thomas Erskine or the two Cairds, their nationality, if less marked, was not less present; it moulded the sentiment, the turn of language, the direction of thought. They could not have been anything but Scotsmen; their native land set her mark upon them without and within. It will be long before she ceases thus to stamp her sons. Every country, every countryside has its romance: the poet, the patriot, is he who perceives and appropriates that of his own.

'Romance, of wayward fancy bred,
Across the seas may roam;
And, wandering, miss the accustomed thread
That weaves romance at home.

'For here, as there, love, mirth, and tears
Its varying surface shows;
Sunshine and shadow, hopes and fears,
Its mingled web compose.

'Nature, be sure, in homespun dressed
More kin to us is grown;
And truth in homelier garb is best,
More near to us, more our own.

'Then let them rove who will, or must:
'Neath native skies be made
Our home, more happy; and our dust
In native earth be laid.'

Scotch stories, it has been said, turn on two subjects—ministers and whisky. Both have played, and play, no inconsiderable part in the life of the people; the curious may be referred to Dean Ramsay, Sir Archibald Geikie, and other chroniclers. One of Cockburn's less known anecdotes is worth preserving. In 1814 he and Thomas Erskine of Linlathen were in charge of a petition to Parliament against slavery which lay for signature in a poor part of Edinburgh. Many who signed the petition to the Lower House refused to sign that to the Upper. The hereditary feeling against prelacy was too strong to reconcile them to addressing the 'Lords Spiritual.' 'I would rather not 'homologate,' was the general and final reply. A kindred distrust of liturgical forms prevailed within living memory; a sincerely religious person has been heard to claim credit for exceptional liberality of sentiment on the ground that she had

'no objection' to the Lord's Prayer! Time has, happily, effaced such prejudices: it would be difficult to-day to find a church in Scotland where it is not used. Over against this state of mind may, perhaps, be set that of the Frenchman who, describing the Catholic liturgy, remarked that it contained a fine prayer called the 'Pater Noster'—adding that he did not know the composer's name. The 'Cottar's Saturday Night' gives the attractive side of old world Scottish piety: and, whatever may be thought of the Calvinism of the Confession of Faith, a religion that found expression in 'The Lord's my Shepherd'—the metrical version of the twenty-third Psalm—was neither harsh nor repellent. These wonderful lines, as touching as they are simple, may be described as a primitive Declaratory Act: the root of the matter is there. The pulpit of the period was dreary: and the mannerisms of fashionable preachers must have struck those who had any sense of humour as grotesque. Fordyce, author of the then popular 'Sermons addressed to Young Women,' apostrophises his hearers on every page as 'My Fair Ones!' Can we wonder that, when these discourses were read by Mr. Collins to the Bennet family, Lydia yawned and finally interrupted the reader? There are limits to patience; and the modern mind is perhaps not so modern as we sometimes suppose. Johnson, however, who was not given to excess of praise, praised Blair with enthusiasm. 'To say that it is good is to say too 'little,' was his verdict on what seems to us the stilted platitudinising of that once famous preacher: though on another occasion he qualified his judgment—'The sermons may not be reprinted after seven years; or, at least, not after Blair's death.' For the thin moralising and still thinner 'natural' theology of the Moderates, the Evangelicals—otherwise known as the 'Wild,' or 'Highfliers'—substituted a dogmatic Calvinism of a singularly dead type.

'There was such a sameness of subject as made it sometimes difficult to distinguish the discourse of one Sunday from among others. The sermons were entirely doctrinal, and however they might commence, after the opening or introduction, hearers were certain to find the preacher falling into the old channel. The fall of man in Adam, his restoration in Christ, Justification by Faith, and the terms of the new covenant formed the staple of each sermon, which, failing this, was not reckoned complete as an orthodox exposition of Christian doctrine.' *

Practical preaching was considered cold and legal. A minister having ventured to take as his text a passage bearing on conduct,

* Dean Ramsay, 'Reminiscences,' c. 11.

was thus criticised by an ancient dame of the congregation, 'If 'there's an ill text in a' the buik, that creature's aye sure to tak' 'it.' Temperance was no part of the older Evangelicalism. Dr. Webster, the leader of the party in the middle of the eighteenth century, is said by 'Jupiter' Carlyle to have been accounted 'excellent company even by those of dissolute manners, while, 'being a five-bottle man, he could lay them all under the table.' This worthy, who was known by the nickname of Dr. 'Magnum 'Bonum,' was (it is said) not insensible to the weakness of the party of which he was the representative, and was accustomed to lament the necessity which he was under of voting with fools while he drank with gentlemen. Another pillar of the Church was met by one of his elders on his way home from a convivial gathering. It was in the small hours of the morning, and the Doctor had looked on the wine when it was red. 'What wad 'the fowk say gin I tell't them I fand ye in sic a predicament, 'minister?' 'Man, they wad sae ye were a leear,' was the conclusive, if unexpected, reply. In Cockburn's time clerical conviviality of this kind was a memory: Sir Harry Moncrieff, the then Evangelical leader, was the most decorous as he was one of the most excellent of men. A staunch Whig, on the accession of George IV. (1820) his public prayer for the new sovereign was, 'O Lord, stablish his heart in righteousness, and in the principles 'of the glorious revolution of sixteen hunner and echty-echt.' His goodness was as sincere as it was unostentatious: to a friend who remarked on his friendly greeting to a personal opponent, he made the fine answer, 'To tell you the truth, I dislike a man 'fewer every day that I live.'

The 'Memorials' end in 1830, when their author became Solicitor-General in Lord Grey's ministry, to be resumed in the 'Journal' which closed only a few days before his death in 1854. The great political events of this period were the Reform Act (1832) and the Disruption (1843). In the first he took an official part, being the original drafter of the Scotch bill; of the second he was an appreciative spectator: 'It is the most honourable 'fact for Scotland that her whole history supplies.' The Reform Bill presented itself to the country in glowing colours: it seemed 'like liberty given to slaves.' Cockburn was too acute to think it final: he predicted that the high-handedness of the landlords would make the ballot necessary, and that in a few years dissenters would no longer be compelled to pay for the maintenance of the Established Church. But it was the opening of a new era. The passing of the Government measures was 'A result solely 'to be ascribed to the power of the people, that is to the dread of 'them—a fact which the people know.' He was not a Radical;

but he saw that the only course to follow with regard to the Radicals was to weaken them by cautiously conceding just claims. This the party which had been so long in power had persistently refused to do. Hence a good deal of wild talk, and a certain risk of wild measures. His remarks on the political crisis of his time may be read with profit in ours.

'*June* 20, 1833.—The introduction of one of the branches of the Constitution as a subject of familiar question is the worst and most inevitable effect of this opposition between the nobles and the commonalty. The people will acquire great power by being appealed to by both of the other parties and by merely holding the scales between them. The Whigs will court them of course, as they have always and naturally done; the Tories will court them too, both by misinterpreting the Whigs and by popular professions which, however insincere, will be Radical in reality. The consummation will be the sinking of the two safe parties, and the triumph of the dangerous one. The Tories are certain to be utterly sacrificed; the Whigs may survive, but it will only be by becoming somewhat Radical. They ought to unite with this party, so far as to take its wiser leaders into their counsels.'

'*May* 21, 1848.—That man must be very blind who does not see that the shadow of the popular tree is enlarging and darkening; and he must see well who can tell us what its fruit will be. Chartism has superseded Radicalism, and draws the whole starving discontent of the country in its train. It is far more a matter of food than of principle. Extension of the franchise is the phrase, but division of property is the object or the expected result; and with a manufacturing population, that is a population of which about a half is always hungry, and the passions of this hunger always excited by political delusion, it is not easy to see how wealth and sense are to keep their feet. The next century will solve this problem and a few more. Will experience and education change human nature, and man become wise and good? Or shall we go on in this perpetual swelter? . . . Will life without a capacity to maintain itself be made a capital offence? Or human productiveness be controlled by physical checks on fecundity? Or population be fitted to the means of subsistence by a regular system of infanticide, to be executed as a piece of sanitary police by public officers, under the direction of the Registrar of Births and Deaths? Meanwhile as many passengers as choose are allowed to crowd the vessel and to eat one another.' *

A strong Disestablishment movement was a feature of the time. That this should have been so was more surprising in Scotland than in England. The Church of Scotland was democratic in constitution and sentiment; her revenues were insig-

* Journal, i. 50; ii. 215.

nificant; the country was solidly Presbyterian; the theological and ecclesiastical differences which form so prominent a feature in English life were unknown. In our own day this movement in both countries, though by no means extinct, is in abeyance. Legislation has removed many of the grievances felt by Non-conformists; those which remain are rather sentimental than practical; and less general interest is taken in ecclesiastical affairs. The nineteenth century was an age of theological controversy, and the retreating wave has left an afterdraw of weariness behind it: the average man of the twentieth cares for none of these things. Let the Churches go their own way. If it is a bad way, so much the worse for them: 'Ephraim is joined 'unto idols; let him alone.' In Scotland the feeling against the State Church throve on the controversies that culminated in the Disruption. This memorable event was not unheralded. The question of patronage was an old sore. Abolished in 1649, and restored at the Restoration, the Act of 1690 had nullified it by conferring on the parishioners the right of approving presentees. It was a condition of the pacification of the country that this should be so; the feeling on the subject was widespread and strong. The Act of Anne, 1712, restoring the privilege of the patrons, was met by so emphatic a protest that for twenty years it remained a dead letter; later, the attempt made to enforce it led to the formation of the first dissenting body, the schism of the Erskines, known as the Secession Church. Between 1739 and 1752 there were fifty-three disputed presentations. Disedifying scenes accompanied the induction of the intended ministers, who forced their way into the churches under military protection and preached to empty benches. Thomas Reid, the philosopher, was ducked by the people of New Machar in a horsepond, and delivered his first sermon protected by a trooper with a drawn sword.

The middle of the eighteenth century witnessed the rise of the Moderates to power in the Church. This party, whose best known representatives were Carlyle of Inveresk, and Robertson the historian, was called many bad names by its opponents, of which Sadducee and Erastian were the mildest. In fact, allowing for a certain lack of enthusiasm characteristic of the age, it occupied the standpoint of that large section of the community which in every Church and at every period opposes the predominance of the clerical over the lay element and the accentuation of dogma at the expense of life. That then, as now, this party should be recruited largely from the ranks of the clergy is not surprising. The clergy are the first victims of clericalism: the iron has entered into their soul. The Moderates saw that,

if the Church were to retain her hold on the nation, she must not lose touch with its best elements. Excellent men as were Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine, the Secession Church had degenerated into a platform for ignorance and fanaticism ; it had become a byword for sectarian squabbles and rancorous personal abuse. And not all who were animated by the Secession spirit had seceded ; the evil leaven worked on in the larger body. It was essential to restrain it by an appeal to the wider conscience of the community represented by the General Assembly, or, in the last resort, by Parliament ; to interpret the Calvinism of the Confession, to discourage the extravagances of popular piety—of which Boston's once famous ' Fourfold State ' is an example—and generally to overcome the dualism which drew a hard and fast line between the secular and the religious, leaving nine-tenths of life and experience on the former side. That in the pursuit of these aims insufficient allowance was made for the prejudices of the ignorant, and for legitimate points of view other than those of the understanding, is true ; but in themselves the aims in question were reasonable. Moderatism fell into disrepute less from its principles than from the inconsiderateness with which its hangers-on applied them. After the Gillespie case, which ended in the formation of the Relief Church (1761), the lay patrons ran riot, and exercised their rights with a wantonness which drew a protest even from Carlyle, who accuses them of presenting ' the least capable and commonly the least worthy ' of all the probationers in their neighbourhood.' The question which intimately affected the Church and country as a whole was a thorny one. Society proceeds on the assumption—which, take it all in all, is verified—that its members will behave more or less reasonably. For gross lapses penalties are provided, but such lapses are presumed to be the exception. Should they cease to be so, should the original assumption fail to justify itself, the social machine is disorganised, a deadlock ensues. A recent instance suggests itself : the women's suffrage movement has brought about a situation with which, grotesque as it may appear to the mere observer, it taxes the resources of government to deal. So with the present case. It was presumed that patrons would appoint and congregations object reasonably. The patronage of a benefice rested originally with the founder or his heirs. This was natural. It was also natural that the parishioners should not be left without a voice in the appointment of their pastor. But direct popular election is open to the objection that it leaves the choice of the teacher to the least educated section of the community, and introduces elements of rivalry and faction which it is important to avoid. The question

is whether the rights of the people cannot be indirectly exercised. We do not doubt that they can. As in the English Church the 'Congé d'élire,' to which a bishop owes his see, interprets the lay mind more accurately than the nomination of a Diocesan Synod or Conference would, so the patron of a benefice, supposing him to be conscientious and intelligent, is likely to express the implicit wish of the villagers more truly than a Parish Council, the ignorance of whose members would frequently defeat their real will. Democracy, however, is often heir by default of other forms of government, and comes in as residuary legatee when they break down. It was so here. It was the abuse of a right, in itself legitimate, that brought about the Veto Act, *i.e.* the law passed in 1834 by the Assembly enjoining presbyteries not to proceed with the induction of a presentee against whom a majority of male parishioners protested, and the acute conflict between the Church and the civil power which followed in its train.

A larger issue, however, lay behind the Patronage controversy: the principle at issue, it was held by many of the best men in Scotland, was the liberty of the Church, or, as they were accustomed to put it, the sovereignty of Christ. The relation between Church and State has been a fertile source of misconception and consequent controversy, because disputants on each side have treated the two conceptions as radically distinct. They are not so. The Church is mankind viewed from a religious standpoint; a national Church is the nation regarded as a community of Christian men. This ideal was realised, if imperfectly, in the Middle Ages; in the modern world it is obscured by the multitude of the sects. The adherents of these bodies need the reminder that the conscience of the community as a whole is to be trusted as against that of any particular section of the community. It is on this principle, we believe, that what are called 'mixed' questions—those relating to education, marriage, divorce, &c.—will in the long run be solved. English Christianity is a larger thing than Anglicanism, whose mission is to represent not to overrule it; in case of conflict the former must prevail. It is the conviction that this is so, the resolve that no sect shall crush the conscience of the nation at large, which has made England Erastian. It was on this ground that the nation rose against Rome at the Reformation, against a political State-Church at the Great Rebellion, against Puritanism at the Restoration; and its temper is unchanged to-day. The case of Scotland was different: it was this that the ministries of the time failed to see. The religious and ecclesiastical unity of the country was practically unbroken: dissent was insignificant;

the people accepted the Shorter Catechism, the clergy the Confession of Faith. It was by no means clear that the majority of the judges represented a larger conscience than did the General Assembly; when the Presbytery of Strathbogie followed the former its members incurred great and general blame. Neither side was conciliatory; on each temper rather than tact was displayed. Lord Aberdeen's reasonable proposal to limit the right of popular protest to cases where just cause for it could be shown was summarily rejected by the Evangelicals; the language of the courts on the other hand was deliberately provocative. Of the Auchterarder case Cockburn —who with Fullerton, the soundest lawyer on the bench, was in the minority—writes: 'The majority made it apparent that 'their legal opinions were affected by their views of the ex-'pediency of the Veto Act. They wish to preserve patronage. 'I wish they may not have ruined it. Scotland will not hear 'the last of the Auchterarder case for the next century.' And when in the following year 1839 the judgment of the Scotch court was confirmed on appeal: 'There never was a greater 'cause adjudged in the House of Lords on reasons more utterly 'unworthy. Their ignorance and contemptuous slightness of 'judgment did great mischief. It irritated and justified the 'people of Scotland in believing that their Church was sac-'rificed to English prejudice.' * He knew the mind of his fellow countrymen better than did the statesmen of either party. Every decision that had been given in the Church cases, with the possible exception of that of Lethendy (he held) had been wrong in law; and the manner in which these decisions had been delivered had been as offensive to the Church as their substance. But he looked deeper, taking into account the springs of motive and action. It was a saying of Lord John Russell that the key to the Irish question was this: that it was not properly borne in mind that as England is inherited by Englishmen and Scotland by Scotchmen, so Ireland is inherited by Irishmen.† Cockburn applied this to Scotland; the ministers of the day, Whig and Tory alike, did not. When the General Assembly, 1838, passed the famous Declaration of Independence, he wrote:

'The very sound of these words recalled the old hill folk. Such language and principles are vernacular in Scottish presbytery. An indifferent man may wonder at their being used in modern times; and on hearing them may think of Drumclog. But upon such matters the Scottish mind has not advanced or receded one inch

* Journal, i. 167, 225.

† Morley's 'Life of Gladstone,' i. 130.

since the days of Knox. Be it desirable or not, the taste of the serious Presbyterian portion of the people is the same now as it was then; and the legal constitution of the Church, as well as the phrases in which it is embalmed, have undergone no change whatever. . . . We must therefore deal with the Scotch as we find them; and as is done in every sect whose dogmas we may happen not to approve of. It is no reason for being unjust to the Catholics or the Jews that we do not like their tenets. It is equally foolish to suppress the claims of the Church of Scotland because we may think them strange or fanatical. The mere critic of manners or opinions may be allowed to sneer; but a statesman is bound to manage a people in reference to their hereditary feelings.' *

The Disruption did not, as he and many others with him expected, inaugurate an age of Disestablishment. The logic of events, indeed, goes on the lines of this forecast; and it would be rash to say that it will not justify itself in the long run. But, so far, their actual course has been in the other direction. The Irish Church has been, and the Welsh may be, disestablished on other grounds than those of abstract principle: the most intelligent advocates of Establishment in Great Britain regard the disestablishment of anti-national Churches as a matter both of policy and justice; it lightens the ship. In Scotland the grievances of the Voluntaries cannot be described as serious; in England the circumstances which produced friction between the Established and the Free Churches have to a great extent ceased to exist. On the other hand, the dangers which threaten the Reformation settlement of religion would be increased by disestablishment. The result would be the removal of the already too few and too inefficient restraints on the sacerdotal party. The wiser minds distrust it; and the example of France under the Pontificate of Pius X. increases their distrust. To disestablish the English Church would be to strengthen the hands of a semi-medieval sect scarcely less antagonistic than Rome itself to the actual world, and to introduce an element of internecine conflict between the religious and the secular elements in society, so far happily unknown to us, into English life. The interests of English religion to-day call not for disestablishment—this, in itself, at most indifferent, would under existing circumstances be prejudicial—but for its desectarianising, its awakening from the confused and confusing dreams of the past to the realities of the present, its readier correspondence with all that is morally and intellectually best in the national life.

It is a far cry from the Disruption to the Union, from Chalmers to Rainy. The gulf between the times is great; between the

* Journal, i. 180.

men, probably, less than it appears. Chalmers was not a bigot. The questions which present themselves to the Church of to-day had in his time not risen above the horizon ; how he would have dealt with them it is impossible to say. There has been a change ; for the mind of the present is not that of the past. But it is a change which stands not for a breach of continuity, but for moral and spiritual life. The same spirit of loyalty to truth which led the men of '43 to choose separation as the lesser of two evils led their successors to consummate a Union in which the Separatist tendencies, so long the bane of Scottish religion, received an effective check, and to inaugurate a larger theology in which the onesidedness of its hereditary Calvinism was overcome. The feeling that the divisions between the various Presbyterian Churches were without sufficient reason was no new thing. 'There must be a great deal of religion among your 'people,' said an English tourist on seeing the variety of places of worship in a Scotch town. 'It's no religion ; it's curstness,' *i.e.* crabbedness, was the answer ; religion unites, temper divides. The United Presbyterian Church was itself a union between two seceding bodies which in 1733 and 1752 respectively had separated from the National Church. The only difference of opinion between it and the Free Church was the abstract one, whether, under certain hypothetical circumstances—which lay, it was admitted, outside the field of the possible—the connection between Church and State was or was not lawful. It was by 'curstness' alone that separation on such a ground could be justified. But various misunderstandings had clustered round the original divergence. The Voluntaryism of the United Presbyterians, conceived by them as a necessary consequence of the Divine Headship, meant for the more Conservative Free Churchmen the assertion of a secular, or 'Godless,' State. And the tendency of the average mind to regard formulas and institutions as static acted for separation: the letter rather than the spirit of '43 was taken as a norm. But a Church is not a mercantile Trust. Its changes are the evidence of its vitality ; the more its setting changes, the more its identity is the same. It can advance its lines, and embrace those outside its borders ; its teaching is not a formula, though it may be embodied in one, but a developing truth. Rainy's task was difficult. He had to maintain his Church on the level of a Church as distinct from a sect ; but he had also to avoid a second Disruption. 'We 'have enough stiff-necked perversity in our borders to shipwreck 'a dozen ordinary Churches,'* he wrote in 1873 : and under the dead weight of this the first attempt at union broke down.

* Life and Letters, i. 190.

Then came the Robertson Smith case. Here as in the matter of the Union, Rainy was at once theologian and statesman—with a leaning to the statesman's side. Freedom and unity were his aims. He would have no heresy libel; from first to last he refused to impose traditional opinions, as such, on the Church. But to prevent a schism, he sacrificed an individual. 'Salus populi suprema lex' is the only comment: the case perhaps was one to which the cynical counsel of Caiaphas applies. The best and most generous men in the Church were against him; and that his action was unconstitutional cannot be denied. Looking back, it is difficult not to think that of two evils he chose the lesser. Had Smith given way on the personal question, the difficulty would have been avoided; but he was unable to see things from any but the theological point of view. 'Don't trust Rainy; he's a Jesuit,' was his advice years later to a young man about to enter the ministry of the Free Church.

The successive steps of the Union controversy (1900–1904) belong to contemporary history. The final judgment, by which the decisions of the Scotch courts were overruled, is characterised by Mr. Hume Brown as 'astonishing'; * and Cockburn's criticism on the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords, though dating fifty years back, may be recalled: 'The House of 'Lords has given such general and just dissatisfaction as a 'Court of Appeal in Scotch causes ever since Eldon retired that 'many loud complaints have been uttered and many strong 'remedies proposed.' † Politicians should rid themselves of the idea that the religious question is a negligible quantity. 'English statesmen,' says a judicious and impartial critic, 'are 'wont to be either blind to the existence of such a question '(that of the relation of the Churches to modern society), or 'else they seek an easy refuge from it in a perfunctory Eras-'tianism, sometimes intellectually refined, sometimes a little 'brutish, but always shallow.' ‡

The religious question in one shape or another lies at the root of every problem of modern life. In Scotland it is, and will be for long, of the first importance. The manifestations of popular zeal are often grotesque and even odious. But under many perversities lies a conviction of the supremacy of conscience which no government can afford to ignore; and which, refined and purified, may in larger days give birth to that ideal communion to which the biographer of Principal Rainy dedicates his 'Life': 'The Church which is yet to arise in Scotland United, National, and Free.'

* History of Scotland, iii. 432. † Journal, ii. 277.
‡ Morley's 'Life of Gladstone,' ii. 115.

Art. VI.—OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES: A CENTENARY STUDY.

1. *Poems.* London: Routledge and Sons. 1845.
2. *Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table.* Boston. 1858.
3. *Professor at the Breakfast-Table.* Boston. 1860.
4. *Elsie Venner: A Romance.* Boston. 1861.
5. *The Guardian Angel.* Boston. 1867.
6. *The Poet at the Breakfast-Table.* Boston. 1872.
7. *John Lothrop Motley: A Memoir.* London: Trübner and Co. 1878.
8. *Ralph Waldo Emerson.* London: Kegan Paul, Trench and Co. 1885.
9. *A Mortal Antipathy.* Edinburgh: William Paterson. 1886.
10. *Collected Works in Thirteen Volumes.* London: Sampson Low and Co. 1891.

In the annals of literature we find many curious coincidences, and perhaps none are of greater interest than the significance of dates. Some periods are more remarkably fruitful than others, but the middle of the eighteenth century, for example, is of peculiar interest to all students of letters. Later on we can trace instances where history repeats itself. The year 1809, as well as the year 1819, may be specially noted as singularly significant, and marks the beginning of a new era in biographical literature. From that time we can trace a galaxy of genius—the most remarkable in point of fact in the past century—each and all distinguished alike in the domains of Literature, Science, and Art. The names that will occur most readily to the reader, to mention but a few, are Tennyson, Gladstone, Darwin, Edward FitzGerald, Lord Houghton, Mark Lemon, and the historians John Hill Burton, A. W. Kinglake, and William Forbes Skene; while in America we have the names of Edgar Allan Poe, President Lincoln, and Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Holmes was born at Cambridge, Massachusetts, on August 29, 1809, son of the Rev. Abiel Holmes and Sarah Wendell, and was as singularly fortunate in his genealogical history as in the year of his birth. By descent Holmes traced his family and forebears for over two hundred years to the families of the great Colonial and Revolutionary period, and to this connexion we owe much that accounts for his historical associations as well as the many admirable traits in his character. The old gambrel-

roofed house in which he was born is lovingly described in the introductory pages of 'A Mortal Antipathy.' During recent years it was demolished, and moralising on its disappearance as a part of his life gone from him, he confessed that it was a case of justifiable *domicide*! It was this house he tells us,

'that was General Ward's headquarters at the breaking out of the Revolution; that the plan for fortifying Bunker's Hill was laid, as commonly believed, in the south-east lower room, the floor of which was covered with dents, made it was alleged by the butts of the soldiers' muskets. In that House, too, General Warren probably passed the night before the Bunker Hill battle, and over its threshold must the stately figure of Washington have often cast its shadow!'

Nay, more, as he states:

'the House in which one drew his first breath and where he one day came into consciousness that he was a personality, an *ego*; a little universe with a sky over him all his own, with a persistent identity, with the terrible responsibility of a separate, independent, inalienable existence—that house does not ask for any historical associations to make it the centre of the earth for him.'

The influence of a happy environment in early years is one of the greatest good fortunes that can come to a well-constituted and well-endowed youth: it colours and influences all his after years. To have had the good fortune to be reared in such a home, precious for its many happy associations with the past, surrounded with a natural horizon and with all that touches the imagination, was indeed a noble heritage. Not less so was it to spend the impressionable years of youth in the pleasant environs of Boston, subject to the subtle influences of natural surroundings—for early in the nineteenth century there were, of course, more evidences of the country around Boston than are to be found there to-day; and also to be reared under the shadow of Harvard University was one of the many privileges which Holmes was fond of keeping in grateful remembrance. 'I am,' he tells us, 'very thankful that the first part of my life was not shut in 'between high walls and treading the unimpressible and un-'sympathetic pavement.'

The intellectual atmosphere in which Holmes was reared was certainly not the least remarkable feature of his fortunate environment. From many passages in his writings we gain glimpses into life, especially literary life, as it existed in New England at the beginning of the past century. It is essential to bear this in mind if an educated insight is to be had into the character of Holmes, or if we can expect to learn the secret of

his cheerful philosophy. He had, for example, the library of his father to roam in and browse among books—English classics, historians and poets—so that, like John Ruskin, he had the love of reading which made him a poet from his earliest years. His father being a clergyman, Holmes had in his youth enough sermons from the pulpit, and he even tells us in later years in some autobiographical notes—'I don't know that I ever read 'one sermon of my own accord during my childhood.' In any case, it is important to note that his reading in early years was of a sufficiently diversified character, although he had a habit of reading very few books through. He always read *in* books rather than *through* them, and it is not unlikely that he was the gainer in the end by this reading habit. It is, in some cases, less a fault than a virtue to have given a too slavish attention to certain books for the mere empty boast of being able to say that we have read every word or page. Some books must be so read, indeed require to be read over and over again, but much is to be gained by reading *in* books rather than by the slavish habit of reading *through* books.

In this critical study it is not our intention to give a formal biography of Oliver Wendell Holmes, but it may be of much interest if the chief events in his long career are briefly noted. He graduated at Harvard in 1829. For a time he studied law, but finding no particular inclination in that direction he abandoned law and began medical studies in Paris in 1833. He not only worked with much purpose and industry in Paris, but he found time to travel to some parts of the Continent, visited Scotland and England, and in 1836 returned to Boston and began to practise. In 1838 he became Professor of Anatomy at Dartmouth (in the States), and later on, in 1847, went to Harvard, where he continued in the professor's chair for the long period of thirty-five years, resigning on November 28, 1882. Thereafter he continued in the enjoyment of a richly deserved learned leisure for the rest of his life, chiefly notable for a return visit to Britain and Paris in 1886 ; and at last, full of years and honours, passed away on October 7, 1894, 'painlessly as so humane a 'man well deserved to make his escape out of life,' as he sat in his chair in his study.

Important as was the life-work of Holmes as a medical professor (which of itself was surely sufficient to warrant his memory being kept in goodly remembrance), it is as a literary man his name will go 'down the ringing grooves of change,' and claim attention from all lovers of literature and life. Perhaps he had, as an author, a wider audience than any other writer in America, for the reason that the conversational style he adopted in his

best-known works was not only a new feature in literature, but was the means that brought him into more friendly relationship with his readers. His style was his own : he did not model his manner or his matter on any other writer, and, besides, his chief purpose in writing in the manner and method as shown in the 'Autocrat,' 'Professor,' and 'Poet at the Breakfast Table,' was to give him a wider range of subjects for the expression of his mature opinions on all that related to the conduct as well as the philosophy of life. Like many another distinguished man of letters he began by writing verse, but, unlike many well-known poets, he did not learn in suffering what he taught in song. Instead he calmly pursued the even tenor of his way, and only once did he wave the star-spangled banner in a way to attract attention. Moreover, he never knew the harassing embarrassments of uncongenial employment, for from his earliest start in life he had a wise father and a sane, even-tempered, sweet and sagacious mother to guide and direct his ways. Thus his whole heart was in his sympathetic studies, and we can mark his intellectual developement in his works in no uncertain manner.

Every child is a poet at heart. He dreams dreams and sees visions, and if born under favourable conditions is full of inspiration long before he has learned to use words to express emotions.

> 'The blue sky overhead, the green expanse under foot, the breath of flowers, the song of birds, the smile of a mother, the voices of loving guardians and friends, the changes of day and night, the roll of the thunder, the blaze of lightning—all that goes to make up the scenery and orchestra of Nature, as yet uninterpreted by language, sink into the consciousness, to be remembered only in the effects they have produced. All this, I believe, is much more literally true than the poetic assertion of Wordsworth about the clouds of glory that we come trailing from a previous existence. Substitute for the "Heaven which is our Home," the unremembered world of our existence before we have learned to label our thoughts and emotions with words, and the child may be said to possess a wonderful inheritance derived from his infancy before "the time of their articulate expression."'

One of the poems—if not the very first—to bring the young poet before a large public was on the occasion when it was proposed to destroy the old frigate named 'Constitution,' but popularly known by the poet's name, 'Old Ironsides.' The fervour of the poet aroused the public to prevent the proposed act of destruction being carried out. The poem has an exultant ring, and it is small wonder that it echoed and re-echoed

throughout the States, for its appeal to sentiment was a powerful one.

'Ay, tear her battered ensign down!
Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
That banner in the sky;
Beneath it rung the battle shout,
And burst the cannon's roar—
The meteor of the ocean air
Shall sweep the clouds no more!

'Her deck, once red with heroes' blood
Where knelt the vanquished foe,
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,
And waves were white below,
No more shall feel the victor's tread,
Or know the conquered knee—
The harpies of the shore shall pluck
The eagle of the sea!

'O better that her shattered hulk
Should sink beneath the wave;
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,
And there should be her grave;
Nail to the mast her holy flag,
Set every threadbare sail,
And give her to the god of storms,
The lightning and the gale!'

Any poet would be proud to be the author of verses like the above; they have the true ring of the poet whose soul is on fire over a national wrong, an act of vandalism unworthy of a great people. As the first poem in his published works, it is an indication of the poet's quality, and puts the reader in sympathy with him at once. It may be, as indicated, the first instance where the young poet had a theme which gave him occasion for waving the flag of freedom (with or without stars and stripes does not matter), but, at the same time, it was one where the sentiment struck right home and the old frigate was saved from destruction. Indeed, a poet like Holmes, and a poem like 'Old Ironsides,' make us wonder why, then or since, in America an office for a Poet-Laureate has not been established.

But it is not as a poet who voiced at all times national feeling and sentiment that Holmes will be remembered best; it will be for his unique *vers d'occasion*. Here his masterly touch is unmistakeable; he is on safe and sure ground where he is an undisputed master. Perhaps no poet during the past century wrote so many verses of this character. On occasions almost innumer-

able he was at the service of societies and individuals to write and recite commemorative verses, and they were all of a high order of merit. Once, when a man of no great note died, his friends tried to get Holmes to say a few words about the deceased which might be published. But he declined. 'Do you see,' he said, 'they want to engage me in the embalming business! but 'I cannot help to preserve this fly in amber.'

One of the poems most likely to be a favourite is the well-known 'The Last Leaf,' one of the most touching in the language. At the time of its first publication so fastidious a critic as Edgar Allan Poe made a copy of it, and it won his high commendation. This copy in latter years became the treasured possession of its author. It was of this poem that President Lincoln became so enamoured that he learnt it by heart; the fourth verse he declared was one of the most pathetic passages in poetic literature. Nothing less than the whole poem can give any fair or adequate idea of its charm, its beauty, its pathos. The poem was suggested by the sight of an old-world Major (Melville) in his cocked hat and breeches.

'I saw him once before,
As he passed by the door,
And again
The pavement stones resound,
As he totters o'er the ground
With his cane.

'They say that in his prime,
Ere the pruning-knife of Time
Cut him down,
Not a better man was found
By the Crier on his round
Through the town.

'But now he walks the streets,
And he looks at all he meets
Sad and wan,
And he shakes his feeble head,
That it seems as if he said,
"They are gone"!

'The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has prest
In their bloom,
And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb.

'My grandmamma has said—
Poor old lady, she is dead
Long ago!
That he had a Roman nose,
And his cheek was like a rose
In the snow.

'But now his nose is thin,
And it rests upon his chin
Like a staff,
And a crook is in his back,
And a melancholy crack
In his laugh.

'I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
At him here;
But the old three-cornered hat,
And the breeches and all that,
Are so queer!

'And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree
In the Spring,
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough
Where I cling.'

Curiously enough, Holmes became almost the last surviving member of the brilliant band of writers who were his friends and contemporaries; and he was distinguished chiefly, even in his old age, for carrying the buoyancy of spirit for which he was particularly noted in earlier years.

In all his poetic work Holmes 'touched alike the springs of 'laughter and the source of tears,' and examples might easily be given, but it will be sufficient if we indicate briefly a few of the more memorable and characteristic poems. 'Dorothy Q.: a 'Family Portrait' appeals both in thought and expression, with its subtle touches of light and shade, to all that is highest in poetry. Others, such as 'My Aunt,' 'The Dilemma,' and 'Grandmother's Story of Bunker Hill,' are poems in which the poet gives proof that he could tell delightful stories or accurately delineate character-portraits; while the 'Deacon's Masterpiece, 'or the Wonderful One-Hoss Shay,' is a poem that may stand by itself as the best and most charming expression of American humour. Who is there that can read the poem of 'The Boys' without recognising that the author was a boy and remained one at heart to the last? His heart was in close touch with all that related to the past in life and thought, while his intellectual outlook was marked by a cheerfulness and sense of humour as rich as it is rare.

> 'I like full well the deep resounding swell
> Of mighty symphonies with chords inwoven;
> But sometimes, too, a song of Burns—don't you?—
> After a solemn storm-blast of Beethoven.'

And he could not resist a sly thrust at the manner of other teachers:

> 'Good to the heels the well-worn slipper feels
> When the tired player shuffles off the buskin;
> A page of Hood may do a fellow good
> After a scolding from Carlyle or Ruskin.'

In his pages, too, we touch imaginative flights, appealing as they do to the highest and noblest instincts, and of such his own special favourite, 'The Chambered Nautilus,' perhaps, is the most characteristic, as it is one of the best known. It is a poetic gem. It appeared first in the 'Autocrat of the Breakfast Table,' half a century ago, and in itself was enough to give any poet an immortality in the world of letters. The last verse, which is a sermon in itself, may be quoted:

'Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!'

'A Poet,' says E. C. Stedman, 'so full of zest is wont to live his life, rather than to scorn delights in service of the thankless muse. Dr. Holmes's easy-going method, and a sensible estimate of his own powers, have defined the limits of his zeal. His poetry was and is, like his humour, the overflow of a nervous, original, decidedly intellectual nature; of sparkling life, no less, in which he gathered the full worth of hey-day experiences. See that glimpse of Paris, a student's pencilled sketch, with Clemence tripping down the Rue de Seine. It is but a bit, yet through its atmosphere we make out a poet who cared as much for the sweets of the poetic life as for the work that was its product. He had through it all a Puritan sense of duty, and the worldly wisdom that goes with a due perception of values, and he never lost sight of his practical career. His profession, after all, was what he took most seriously. Accepting then, with hearty thanks, his care-dispelling rhyme and reason, pleased often by the fancies which he tenders in lines of imagination and power, we go through the collection of his verse, and see that it has amounted to a great deal in the course of a bustling fifty years.'

Unquestionably it is as an essayist that Holmes will always be ranked with Charles Lamb as one of the most companionable of authors. In his delightful pages his characters are introduced chiefly as convenient pegs for the expression of his opinions on a great variety of topics. On every page of the 'Autocrat' are found wise aphorisms and sparkling epigrams which tempt quotation. The famous 'Breakfast-Table' series contains undoubtedly his greatest and most original writings. His witty style, wise thought, genial, kindly satire, and his far-reaching discursiveness, will always appeal to a very large audience; while his happy and pleasantly entertaining wealth of illustration, lit up with gems of poetic fancy and pathos, reaches the sympathies of all lovers of literature.

The 'Autocrat' appeared first as two articles in the 'New 'England Magazine' in November 1831 and February 1832. When in 1837 the 'Atlantic Monthly' was issued, the silence was broken by Holmes (after an interval of twenty-five years) beginning the first of his famous essays. Not only was Holmes one of the first contributors to the 'Atlantic Monthly,' but he remained all his life a favourite author in its pages. Perhaps no writer in the pages of his favourite magazine was on such intimate

relationship with his readers as Dr. Holmes. He remarks somewhere that he felt more at home in it than in any other literary journal. And indeed it is not to be greatly wondered at, for, from the first page of his writings to the last, he was looked upon as a guide, philosopher, and especially as a friend in all that was best in essay-writing. He was indebted to no previous writer for his conversational style, it was the easy, pleasant, friendly writing of a man who had something to say ; and it captivated and appeals to readers in a way seldom known among modern writers. He begins the ' Autocrat ' in this fashion :

' I was just going to say, when I was interrupted, that one of the many ways of classifying minds is under the heads of arithmetical and algebraical intellects. All economical and practical wisdom is an extension or variation of the following arithmetical formula : $2 \times 2 = 4$. Every philosophical proposition has the more general character of the expression $a + b = c$. We are mere operatives, empirics, and egotists, until we learn to think in letters instead of figures.'

His theory of conversation is one that is subtle and suggestive ; and he was fond of having a quiet thrust at the people who save their bright thoughts as being too precious for conversation, looking upon it as a cash article, or at any rate as a sort of merchantable literature. In one place he compares conversation of the right kind to a man driving a sprinkling machine through a dusty street—the man is not wasting the water, he is fulfilling a very useful function in the economy of nature. What, he asks, would be the state of the highways of life if we did not drive our *thought-sprinklers* through them with the valves open, sometimes ? Holmes was no miser in conversation ; it was his readiest method of reading men, and it is well known he preferred to do that rather than study mankind in almost any other way. Let his own words be quoted here to illustrate his manner and style :

' Besides, there is another thing about this talking, which you forget. It shapes our thoughts for us ; the waves of conversation roll them as the surf rolls the pebbles on the shore. I rough out my thoughts in talk as an artist models in clay. Spoken language is so plastic—you can pat and coax, and spread and shave and rub out, and fill up and stick on so easily, when you work that soft material, that there is nothing like it for modelling. Out of it comes the shapes which you turn into marble or bronze in your immortal books, if you happen to write such. Or, to use another illustration, writing or printing is like shooting with a rifle ; you may hit your reader's mind, or miss it ; but talking is like playing at a mark with the pipe of an

engine ; if it is within reach, and you have time enough, you can't help hitting it.'

Thus the ' thought-sprinkler ' is brought to play on his method, and it is continually at work, so that his writing is full of conversational freedom, which allows him to get instantly into touch with his readers. And he seldom misses the mark at which he aims.

Many of the questions at which Holmes aimed his gentle shafts of satire are, of course, no longer burning questions. The march of Time has given them their quietus. Nevertheless it is of interest to remember how, in his day, Holmes was an influence in the educational world. Whenever we find a writer becoming an instructor of enlightened public opinion, it follows that his critics increase in the same, if not a greater ratio, than his popularity. All kinds of cranks then follow in the wake of the critics. This is not always an edifying spectacle, and unless the profes sional reformer has a due sense of the proportion of things he may begin to doubt his own sanity if not the wisdom of his suggested reforms. If, however, he is graciously endowed with the saving grace of humour—of seeing where the fun comes in—he is not unlikely to have the best of the fight in the end. In this particular sense Holmes was singularly fortunate. He could always see the humorous side, and not only did he laugh last, but he invariably laughed first at his critics. Has he not told us that ' every real thought on every real subject knocks the wind ' out of somebody or other ' ? and knowing this he was content to laugh at some of his critics. Carlyle also was distinguished for a keen sense of humour, and his laugh was his salvation. Like Holmes,

> ' He says an undisputed thing
> In such a solemn way.'

The ' Autocrat ' could always be depended upon to do that in his *rôle* of reformer. No one was in a better position than he was to assert confidentially that ' insanity is often the logic of an ' accurate mind overtasked ' ; and we may smile, if we care, when he tells us that ' a weak mind does not accumulate force enough ' to hurt itself ; stupidity often saves a man from going mad.' He was well aware that the world is full of people with squinting brains, who can neither see clear nor think straight, but who nevertheless foolishly imagine that because they happen to imagine the world is out of joint and going down the abyss to destruction, others who differ from such conclusions are enemies of society. Holmes had a great compassion on such cranks and faddists, and when attacking a public abuse, a foolish fad or

extreme opinions on all manner of subjects, he had the courage of his convictions, and cared little how often he met opposition in his fight for reform. And yet, curiously enough, his pen was never dipped in gall; he had the gift of saying hard things in the gentlest manner, hence he has ever been known as the *genial* 'Autocrat,' surely one of the highest characteristics bestowed on any famous author.

It would be an easy task to give many illustrations or examples of his happy sayings, his *obiter dicta*, to prove this contention, but the undernoted, taken from a rich treasure-house, may suffice:

'Talking is like playing on the harp; there is as much in laying the hands on the strings to stop their vibrations as in twanging them to bring out their music.'

'You never need think you can turn over any old falsehood without a terrible squirming and scattering of the horrid little population that dwells under it.'

'A man whose opinions are not attacked is beneath contempt.'

'Nobody can do anything to make his neighbours wiser and better without being liable to abuse for it.'

'Society is always trying in some way or other to grind us down to a single flat surface.'

'Our reverence is good for nothing if it does not begin with self-respect.'

'I like children. Pretty much all the honest truth-telling there is in the world is done by them.'

'A woman fascinates a man quite as often by what she overlooks as by what she sees.'

'Travellers change their guineas, not their characters.'

'Put not your trust in money, but put your money in trust.'

'Life, as we call it, is nothing but the edge of the boundless ocean of existence, where it comes on soundings.'

'The sea drowns not humanity and time; it has no sympathy with either; for it belongs to eternity, and of that it sings its monotonous song for ever and ever.'

'There are inscriptions in our hearts which are never to be seen except at dead-low tide.'

'A man's learning dies with him; even his virtues fade out of remembrance; but the dividends on the stocks he bequeaths to his children live and keep his memory green.'

'Our brains are seventy-year clocks. The Angel of Life winds them up once for all, then closes the case, and gives the key into the hand of the Angel of the Resurrection.'

'Most persons have died before they expire—died to all earthly longings, so that the last breath is only, as it were, the locking of the already deserted mansion.'

In 'A Fable for Critics' Lowell gives us pen-portraits of his

more famous contemporaries, and that of Holmes is one of the truest and most characteristic :

> ' There's Holmes, who is matchless among you for wit ;
> A Leyden-jar always full-charged, from which flit
> The electrical tingles of hit after hit.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> His are just the fine hands, too, to weave you a lyric
> Full of fancy, fun, feeling, or spiced with satiric,
> In a measure so kindly, you doubt if the toes
> That are trodden upon are your own or your foes'.'

While it is true that Holmes chose essay-writing as represented in his earlier and best-known books as his most suitable medium for inculcating the lessons that best suited his own generation, it is, we must always remember, equally true that in his novels he had a like object in view. The series of character-studies on curious psychological and physiological problems were made to suit his purpose and in a similar manner to his more familiar works ; hence he may justly be termed a novelist with a purpose, and that, too, in a way of his own with the desire of doing more than writing a pleasant story. The curious fact is that, as a rule, his novels are not pleasant in the sense that is commonly understood ; nor was he concerned chiefly with the aim and object of attaining the largest circulation. A novelist, he held, should be a preacher and teacher, and more concerned in his duty as instructor than in seeking the largest pecuniary reward for his labours. Opinions may differ on the ethics of novel-writing ; nevertheless it is asserted by many competent judges in the present day that there never was a period when so much time was devoted to novel-writing and novel-reading with such miserable educational results. Our public libraries are crowded with readers whose chief aim is to be amused, although signs are not wanting to prove that even this class shows some diminishing numbers in recent years. Indeed, Holmes's remark is very appropriate when he asserts that ' the highways of literature ' are spread over the shells of dead novels, each of which has ' been swallowed at a mouthful by the public, and is done with.'

If we glance over the facts of his life we learn that he did not become a novelist until he had attained the mature age of fifty. To many readers this may seem a case of deferred developement of talent, but in truth it is not an unprecedented experience. Sir Walter Scott, for instance, was well on in mid-life ere he wrote ' Waverley,' which was written with exceptional rapidity. Holmes had not the flowing pen of Scott, but as his novels were of a vastly different character this perhaps need not be any cause

for comparison. In all his novels—'Elsie Venner,' 'The Guardian Angel,' and 'A Mortal Antipathy'—he has a story to tell, but it is always subordinated to the purpose in view. Some one has called them 'medicated novels,' quite appropriately too, in view of the author's profession. Each of these stories is chiefly characterised by originality of plot as well as by delicate handling of delicate subjects. They are also remarkable for their character-drawing, for by the power of his sympathetic imagination he has made his characters real flesh and blood creations, not mere automatons, so that we come to know them as well almost as we know our most intimate relations. While admitting the life-likeness of his characters, it must also be stated that the problems discussed in his pages are of more than contemporary interest, and on this score are likely, as works of art and as literature, to suffer by contrast or comparison with other writers. In 'Elsie Venner,' no less than in the other novels referred to, while the interest is well maintained, yet on account of the fact that the author sets out with the definite purpose of making his readers think—not always an easy matter even in 'medicated novels'—the audience appealed to will be a comparatively select one. In this novel the problem dealt with is to show how far any individual, suffering from any hereditary or other prenatal bias, is a responsible being and answerable to the ordinary moral or human law as a free agent. When Holmes was dealing with difficult subjects such as the influences of heredity, sin, and moral responsibility in all their aspects, he always chose the line of least resistance, and like a wise judge allowed a large measure of probability in delivering his sentences. In one passage in 'Elsie Venner' in this way he comes to the kernel:

'It is very singular that we recognise all the bodily defects that unfit a man for military service, and all the intellectual ones that limit his range of thought, but always talk at him as if his moral powers were perfect. I suppose we must punish evil-doers as we extirpate vermin; but I don't know that we have any more right to judge them than we have to judge rats and mice, which are just as good as cats and weasels, though we think it necessary to treat them as criminals.'

It is unnecessary to dissect all the characters in this story, or to be concerned with the details of the working out of the problem. Briefly stated it is as follows: Elsie is the only child of Dudley Venner, who was a retired, reserved, taciturn man. Prior to her birth her mother was bitten fatally by a rattlesnake. The mother dies. The child was partially endowed with a serpent-like nature from her birth. As she grew up the

peculiar influences under which she laboured became by-and-by more noticeable and pronounced. The general opinion is that she is to some extent mentally unbalanced, and by the powers of her extraordinary nature unable to master or control her actions by the ordinary standards of right and wrong. The author tells us that

'the real aim of the story was to test the doctrine of "original sin" and human responsibility for the disordered violation coming under that technical denomination. Was Elsie Venner, poisoned by the venom of the crotalus, or rattlesnake, before she was born, morally responsible for the "volitional" aberrations which, translated into acts, became what is known as "sin," and, it may be, what is punished as crime? If, on presentation of the evidence, she becomes by the verdict of the human conscience a proper object of Divine pity and not of Divine wrath, as a subject of moral poisoning, wherein lies the difference between her position at the bar of judgment, human or Divine, and that of the unfortunate victim who received a moral poison from some remote ancestor before he drew his first breath?'

This is the psychological and moral problem answered in detail in this novel. The same problem has an equally live interest for readers to-day as it had for the generation that perused this story when it was first published. It is one of the subjects that must always claim attention from students and pastors and masters; and as we are ever dealing with all kinds of wrong-doers as persons who are not morally whole and sound, who have some mental twist which affords food for legislators to frame new laws, so it is true that, at the present day, we find a greater desire than ever by our governing authorities to study some criminal cases as more fit subjects for careful psychological study than for punishment. And perhaps to no writer are we more indebted for educating public opinion than to the author of 'Elsie Venner.' He was one of the first writers to open up the question in an informative and suggestive manner, and therefore we should gratefully remember our indebtedness to him.

In 'The Guardian Angel' we have the familiar case of hereditary disposition, or, in other words, another study in the science of Heredity. In this story the chief idea is given in the early part of it in these words:

'It is by no means certain that our individual personality is the single inhabitant of these our corporeal frames. Nay, there is recorded an experience of one of the living persons mentioned in this narrative which, so far as it is received in evidence, tends to show that some at least, who have long been dead may enjoy a kind of secondary

and imperfect, yet self-conscious, life in these bodily tenements which we are in the habit of considering exclusively our own. There are many circumstances, familiar to common observers, which favour this belief to a certain extent. Thus, at one moment we detect the look, at another the tone of voice, at another some characteristic movement of this or that ancestor, in our relations or others. There are times when our friends do not act like themselves, but apparently in obedience to some other law than that of their own proper nature. We all do things both awake and asleep which surprise us. Perhaps we have co-tenants in this house we live in. No less than eight distinct personalities are said to have co-existed in a single female mentioned by an ancient physician of unimpeachable authority. In this light we may perhaps see the meaning of a sentence, from a work which will be repeatedly referred to in this narrative, viz. "This body in which we journey across the isthmus between the two oceans is not a private carriage, but an omnibus." '

The question of dual personality is a complex one, and one, too, that has made strong appeals to some well-known writers. To give the details of the story, or even to summarise it, is not our intention; those who are familiar with it need no elaborate interpretation, while for others who have not yet made its acquaintance it can be said that it is a literary production in fiction of a high character and sustained interest. It is a story artistically complete and with real humanity in its pages, and forms one of the most suggestive studies on a subject that appeals to the reader's sympathies and curiosity.

Holmes was in his seventy-fifth year when he published his last novel, 'A Mortal Antipathy,' which he very daringly named the '*First* opening of the New Portfolio.' The mainspring or *raison d'être* of the story is a strange psychological and pathological problem, and one that is of perennial and absorbing interest. Indeed, we may say that Holmes seemed never to be happier than when he had a problem of some kind to solve, one of a scientific nature being all the more welcome. The hero of 'A Mortal Antipathy' was Maurice Kirkwood, who was, as an infant, taken so suddenly from his nurse's arms as to startle him into throwing himself from her arms over the parapet of the balcony on which they stood. Fortunately he was saved from injury, perhaps death, by falling into a rose-bush. So affected, however, was he that when he grew up he had a 'mortal anti-'pathy' towards all womankind. It was, at best, only a physical defect, but all his efforts to overcome it were unavailing and to no purpose. The natural consequence is that, although he was normally constituted in other respects in all his social sympathies, he is nevertheless forced to lead an almost

exclusive or solitary life on the borders of society. Naturally he becomes a subject of curiosity, especially with the girl-students at the Corinna Institute, situated at the end of the lake. Two of them particularly begin to study him and style him the 'Enigma.' But as the story develops the study is not without interest to the reader. For, when Maurice is on a sick bed, and helpless in a burning house, one of the girl-students volunteers and is successful in rescuing and carrying him to a place of safety. Not only does he escape from the fire, but also from his antipathy, for the shock, no less than the method of rescue, is the means whereby his organism is restored to a normal condition. The sequel can be anticipated.

Not only is this story characteristic for its artistic handling and the natural revelation of the individual character-drawing, but what is of equal interest are the passages where the author finds occasion to deal with other real live questions which go to the developement and illustration of the story. In the introduction, for instance, we have the following warning, which is of as much interest to-day as when it was written. We may be very sure it was a question near the author's heart. It was a wise counsel, and tells a story which is ever near as well as significant of the age we live in :

'Wealth is a steep hill which the father climbs slowly and the son often tumbles down precipitately ; but there is a tableland on a level with it, which may be found by those who do not lose their head in looking down from its shapely cloven summit. Our dangerously rich men can make themselves hated, held as enemies of the race, or beloved and recognised as its benefactors. The clouds of discontent are threatening, but if the gold-pointed lightning-rods are rightly distributed the destructive element may be drawn off silently and harmlessly. For it cannot be repeated too often that the safety of great wealth with us lies in obedience to the new version of the Old World axiom, Richesse Oblige.'

As a biographer Holmes had only two occasions for exercising his gifts as a writer—his first in 1878, when he wrote the memoir of Motley, the historian, who had been a life-long friend ; and the second, in 1884, when he published the memoir of Emerson. Both books are now interesting, chiefly as personal tributes from an old friend, and in each case the work was undertaken more as a task than anything else. The volumes may or may not be model biographies, but they were conspicuous for being written by one who was intimately associated with the historian and the philosopher, and who could be trusted to give a fair and accurate delineation of their work and character. His chief

desire was to explain as fully as his limits would allow the life-work of his friends, and to do justice to them as seekers after truth. Perhaps Emerson the philosopher gives Holmes the greatest scope to exercise his powers as a critic. It is always a pleasant sight to see a great man as he appeared to his contemporaries, and in dealing with Emerson we can mark the divergence of opinion of our author towards the philosopher. Holmes, at the same time, had the art to conceal his art as a biographer; the Emersonian philosophy is lucidly explained, but the reader is left in no doubt and learns that the biographer could not be classed as 'Emersonian.' It has been remarked that although Holmes had the privilege of Emerson's friendship,

'he understood Emerson with his intellectual intelligence, but he did not appreciate him sympathetically to any considerable degree, and was very far indeed from "sitting at his feet." Emerson wrote of religions, Holmes wrote of creeds; Emerson dealt with man, Holmes concerns himself with men; Emerson found his topics in idealities, Holmes found his in things concrete; Emerson was mystical, sometimes quite incomprehensible, but no reader could close his intelligence against the lucidity of every sentence of Holmes. The truth was that it was interesting to see two men, bred from like stock, belonging to the same generation, living amid the same surroundings, both engaged in knocking off the fetters of old thought and belief, yet doing their work along lines so widely apart, in methods so utterly diverse, reaching such different kinds of men through such different influences, and never moving even tentatively towards any alliance in effort.'

Notwithstanding this divergence of thought it is the fact that perhaps no other contemporary of Emerson's was better fitted to write his memoir: he was sufficiently independent not to be classed as a slavish idolater, and therefore better qualified to discuss his philosophical position particularly, without in any way showing a bias where delicate literary treatment was demanded. His own words are, in this connexion, sufficiently explicit, and may best be given in his own deliberate manner, as graphically described in the introduction to 'A Mortal 'Antipathy':

'I did not know how difficult a task I had undertaken in venturing upon a memoir of a man whom all, or almost all, agree upon as one of the great lights of the New World, and whom many regard as an unpredicated Messiah. Never before was I so forcibly reminded of Carlyle's description of the work of a newspaper editor—that threshing of straw already thrice-beaten by the flails of other labourers in the same field. What could be said that had not been said of "transcendentalism" and of him who was regarded as a

prophet ; of the poet whom some admired without understanding, a few understood, or thought they did, without admiring, and many both understood and admired—among these there being not a small number who went far beyond admiration, and lost themselves in devout worship ? While one exalted him " as the greatest man that ever lived," another, a friend famous in the world of letters, wrote expressly to caution me against the danger of overrating a writer whom he is content to recognise as an American Montaigne and nothing more.'

Between these poles of thought Holmes steered a wise middle course, confident in the belief that, while he was not a blind worshipper of his great contemporary and friend, Emerson would be found his own best interpreter in his writings. Withal he has given us a portrait of Emerson that will be as long cherished in the gallery of literary portraits as any that may yet be placed there. And we have still every reason to cherish the memory of the man who was one of the first to recognise the genius of Carlyle when he was, as yet, unknown in his own country, and who braved the dangers of the ocean, at a time when it was a voyage long and tedious, to seek out the author of ' Sartor ' Resartus ' in the wilds of Dumfriesshire, where he not only met the lonely scholar nursing his mighty heart, as he said, but spent a day that will be ever memorable in the annals of literature.

In 1885 the present writer ventured as a young man to write a letter to Holmes to express appreciation of the memoir of Emerson then recently published, and to tell him that a well-known writer, the late William Howie Wylie (author of ' Thomas ' Carlyle : the Man and his Work '), had stated that the Memoir of Emerson was in many respects a gem of its kind. Dr. Holmes' reply, which has never been published, is of some interest at the time of his centenary anniversary.

' Boston, March 25th, 1885.

' Your kind letter of the 12th has given me great pleasure. I took upon me the office of writing the Memoir of Emerson for the series " American Men of Letters " with great hesitation at the urgent request of Mr. Warner, the editor. The book has been very well received, and my fears that I should disappoint the severely critical circle of readers who are sensitive with reference to all that touches a man more nearly idolised than any writer we ever had, have not been realised. You have added your generous testimony and that of your friend Mr. Wylie to give me further assurance that my service, such as it is, has proved acceptable.

' I thank you most cordially for taking the trouble to write and tell me that my little book has pleased you. It is a far cry from Boston to Glasgow, and I feel highly flattered to know that my voice has reached you and called forth so grateful a response.'

'Emerson wrote of religions, Holmes wrote of creeds.' While it cannot be claimed for Holmes that he was a religious teacher, it is yet true that he thought much and very seriously too about religion. The world may be content to claim him as a humourist and nothing more, but if so the world—the literary world—makes a serious mistake. Holmes's father was a clergyman of the Calvinistic type, but the gifted son, instead of preaching from a pulpit, reached a wider audience, a larger congregation, through his books. Every author worthy of the name is less or more a preacher—has some truths to inculcate, some message to his age. If he has not that conviction, then he has clearly mistaken his profession; he is the proverbial round man in the square hole. Holmes was not only a preacher, but he was also a teacher—not always, be it noted, exactly synonymous terms. His cheery optimism helped to carry his message in a better and more forcible fashion because of its saving grace of humour. He scored in this particular gift, and few authors were recognised as a greater favourite by his readers. From his earliest days, the days of his youthful studies in Paris, he readily recognised the necessity of taking broad views; and in an age which was not remarkable nor conspicuous for religious toleration it proves, if his attitude can be said to prove anything, that, in his case, the boy was father of the man to be. When he wrote out his creed he had the characteristic qualification in reserve duly noted, which is observed in many another document, that it was to be understood—'errors excepted.' It is engaging and simple, and is in the following words. It is the key-note to the character of a man loved and honoured by his friends and a large circle of readers in Europe and in America.

'My creed, as I said—is to be found in the first two words of the Pater Noster.

'I know there is a great deal to shake it in the natural order of things, but my faith is strong enough to stand against all the untowardness of the blind elements amidst which we are placed here, and out of which our earthly tabernacles are shaped.

'I see no corner of the Universe which the Father has wholly deserted. The forces of Nature bruise and wound our bodies, but an artery no sooner bleeds than the Divine hand is placed upon it to stay the flow. A wound is no sooner made than the healing process is set on foot. Pain reaches a certain point, and insensibility comes on—for fainting is the natural anodyne of curable griefs, as death is the remedy of those which are intolerable.

'There are difficulties I know; but it appears to me on the whole:

'1. That the Deity must be as good as the best conscious being he makes.

'2. That it is more consonant with our ideas of what is best to suppose that suffering, which is obviously disciplinary and benevolent in its aim, is to be temporary rather than eternal.

'3. That if the Deity expects the genuine love and respect of independent, thinking creatures, he must in the long run treat them as a good father would treat them.

'4. That to suppose this world a mere trap baited with temptations of sense, which only Divine ingenuity could have imagined, with the certainty that the larger part of the race would fall into it, and that to the tortures of a very helpless, ignorant, ill-educated being is to be added the cruellest sting of all, that he brought it on himself, does not seem a probable course of action on the part of "Our Father."

'5. When I, as an erring mortal, am confronted with Infinite purity, it appears to me an absurdity to talk of judging me by that standard.

'6. Either my moral nature will remain human in another life, or it will be changed to something not human—I am obliged to think that I shall love those same qualities in another state that I love in this. *Can* I love a father who lets me ruin myself?

'What if I should happen to love another as well as myself? *Can* I love a being who lets that other ruin himself (I mean go to everlasting torment)?

'What if I happen to be so human that I love and pity all my race, and cannot be happy if they are to be writhing in agony for ever, and nobody suffered to go near to help or pity? *Can* I love the being who has arranged the Universe so that they shall come to this?

'But I *must* love my Creator, for he is as kind as my father was, and as tender as my mother was. Otherwise he has made a creature better than himself, according to our human definition of better—which is contrary to all reason, as it seems to me.'

Emerson, in his essay on 'Circles,' puts into terse and pregnant language his views, which may very appropriately supplement the foregoing definition of Holmes's creed:

'The key,' says Emerson, 'to every man is his thought. Sturdy and defying though he look, he has a helm which he obeys, which is the idea after which all his facts are classified. He can only be reformed by showing him a new idea which commands his own. The life of a man is a self-evolving circle, which, from a ring imperceptibly small, rushes on all sides outwards to new and larger circles, and that without end. The extent to which this generation of circles, wheel within wheel, will go, depends on the force or truth of the individual soul. For it is the inert effort of each thought, having formed itself into a circular wave of circumstance—as, for instance, an empire, rules of an art, a local usage, a religious rite—to heap itself on that ridge, and to solidify and hem in the life. But if the soul is quick and strong, it bursts over that boundary on all sides, and expands another orbit on the great deep, which also runs up

into a high wave, with attempt again to stop and to bind. But the heart refuses to be imprisoned ; in its first and narrowest pulses, it already tends outward with a vast force, and to immense and innumerable expansions.'

That is what happened to the soul of Oliver Wendell Holmes. As years went by, every new experience taught him that God is love ; and if he had not followed the gleam, if he had not burst the bounds of conventional religion as he found it, he would certainly not have become the preacher and teacher we recognise him to be to-day.

American poets, it is said, have been true to their own land in expressing its innate freedom, patriotism, its aspiring resolve, and perhaps no poet proved a better example or more clearly demonstrated it in his writings than Holmes. Few studies, indeed, are more interesting than to trace the career of an eminent writer, to follow in systematic manner the course of his intellectual developement, and to weigh and consider the forces which have gone to make him distinguished above others in the world of letters. For the test of greatness in literature consists not so much in quantity as in quality. And in Oliver Wendell Holmes, who will always be remembered chiefly because of his marked individuality, we recognise a writer of singular beauty of character, genial humour, brilliant wit, cheerful philosophy, and charm of style. His life motto may be summed up in his well-known couplet :

> 'Leave what you've done for what you have to do,
> Don't be "consistent," but be simply true.'

Art. VII.—HISTORIES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

1. *The Cambridge Modern History.* Planned by the late Lord Acton, LL.D. Edited by A. W. Ward, Litt.D., G. W. Prothero, Litt.D., and Stanley Leathes, M.A. Vol. VIII. The French Revolution. Cambridge University Press. 1904.
2. *Danton: a Study.* By Hilaire Belloc. London: Nisbet and Co. 1899.
3. *Robespierre: a Study.* By Hilaire Belloc. London: Nisbet and Co. 1901.
4. *Marie Antoinette.* By Hilaire Belloc. London: Methuen and Co. 1909.

The popular tendency to look upon the French Revolution as some unique and isolated phenomenon persists in spite of all the attempts of scholars and writers to trace its continuity with the preceding and succeeding periods of history. This tendency has some justification. Most of the world's history, undeterred by occasional eddies and back currents, is only strengthened and broadened by the freshets and tributaries to its main stream, and flows uninterruptedly, patently one with its first faint beginnings. But one or two groups of events and one or two personalities seem to be sharply cut off from this general stream, sometimes like some quiet backwater lying apart, more often like some raging, devastating whirlpool or some mighty fall of waters caused by a gigantic cataclysm of Nature independent of the stream's normal action. Those who have travelled down the Zambesi's broad and almost placid current will remember how at one point its waters seem suddenly and without any marked quickening of speed to disappear irrecoverably into the bowels of the earth. They have not been utterly engulphed; but this great river, a mile and more in breadth, has plunged, boiling, foaming and hissing, down a sheer precipice of three hundred feet, to find itself again in a deep, half-hidden channel a few hundreds of feet wide, which twists and turns upon itself in snake-like contortions, until it finally comes out into the light of day, once more a broad and almost placid river showing little trace of the churning and upheaval which it has undergone. It is hardly wonderful, perhaps, that the untutored savages who live near these stupendous falls should isolate them from the Zambesi and individualise them as some awful personality to be propitiated by the weaving of simple charms. And indeed it is hard even for the sophisticated traveller from our more scientific and less impressionable hemisphere not to look

on the Victoria Falls as something by themselves and disconnected from the great river of which they are really an integral part and whose waters, both above and below, are one with them.

So it is with some few outstanding episodes of history. The career of Alexander the Great, the overwhelming of the Roman Empire by barbarians, are examples of these cataclysmal events which no amount of scholarship and research, which not even a Gibbon and still less an Arrian, will ever be able to make absolutely harmonious with the events which gave them birth or all their ultimate consequences. But these incidents are remote ; the state of society in which they occurred is in many ways barely conceivable to us in spite of all the rich material brought to light by modern scholarship ; and the annalists of the day, with their imperfect apprehension of the significance of events they were witnessing, often omit mention of what would most stimulate our interest and enlighten our understanding. With the French Revolution it is different. Even to-day there may well be men alive who have had speech with those who witnessed or took an active part in the events of that time ; the official documents and the memoirs and letters of those present in France during the Revolution are as ample as those illustrating any other period of history. We ourselves, indeed, still live under the influence of many of the ideas from which the Revolution originated, and use many of the phrases current during those years. Moreover, since those days men of genius have illumined with the flash of their insight corners and aspects of the phenomenon which we call the French Revolution, have caused many of the chief agents to live and move before us, and have made clear the sequence of most of the events. Nevertheless, the French Revolution still remains to many of us a monstrous portent and very much of a mystery. Its events are barely related to the ordinary course of human experience ; its personalities abnormal and gigantic, moved indeed by human passions, but passions of so unrestrained and elemental a character that they seem to belong to Titans rather than to mortals of the same clay as ourselves. To many of us a Mirabeau, a Danton, a Robespierre, a Marat, a Hébert and a Napoleon, to take a few names almost at random, still appear more akin to some of the fabled monsters of antiquity, a genie of the 'Arabian Nights,' a Goliath or an Antæus, than to the humdrum statesmen and soldiers of more tranquil times. And indeed there is much of reason in this view. Excessive power and the convulsion of society often made these men seem as gods in their own sight, unhampered by the restrictions of convention and ready to give

full rein to the most powerful side of their nature. As Carlyle, after reading Thiers, wrote in his journal of the Revolution: 'It was a stripping bare of the human soul: a fearful bursting 'out of the Infinite through the thin rinds of Habit (of the 'manufactured Finite) which constrains it, makes it effectively 'active (industrious) and a Life.' Nor was it merely the notable leaders of the Revolution who showed this abnormal character. Those raging crowds suddenly appearing one knows not at whose call or whence, and as suddenly vanishing again into nothingness when their terrible work was done, are more like a nightmare's horrible phantasies than anything we have ever experienced in the light of day. It seems hardly conceivable, were it not the fact that the horrors of the September massacres were carried out by barely two hundred obscure individuals maddened by panic, drunk with blood, and heated with a frenzy for vengeance, men who in normal times probably seemed dull, industrious and law-abiding citizens.

To our forefathers, with their comparatively modest means of observation and their defective methods of investigation, a comet appearing in the regular and ordered system of the starry universe was something inexplicable and monstrous, portending disaster and a sign of Heaven's displeasure. It was a thing apart and unrelated to experience or knowledge, 'dreadful to 'be seene, with bloudie haires':

> 'That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
> In th' arctick sea, and from his horrid hair
> Shakes pestilence and war.'

So for a long time appeared to our fathers, and so appears to many of us even to-day, that strange portent which inaugurated our modern era. But just as science has at length taught us that comets are no less a part of the stellar system than the familiar planets that we see every night, and that the laws of their motions can be ascertained as exactly, so gradually historians have brought their readers to see that the French Revolution was no mere fortuitous occurrence, but one springing directly from the events of preceding centuries and the circumstances and personalities of the time, and that these personalities were not inhuman monsters but men explicable by those who have a true understanding and insight into human nature. This is all true; but it is also true that, like the comet which, though now intelligible in its motions, is an ever-recurring marvel when it appears to those familiar with the homely face of the stars, the French Revolution, in spite of all elucidation and simplification, will always seem one of the most wonderful and notable

episodes in human history. And the instinct of the vulgar to regard it as something strange and unwonted will remain a useful counterpoise to the pedants who try to reduce its events to the everyday manifestations of ordinary life.

The first history of the French Revolution to succeed in making it intelligible as an historical event, to be alive itself, to breathe life into the scheming, rioting, eloquent, enthusiastic or frenzied Frenchmen of those days and to call up again before us the dull, phlegmatic king or the Sea-Green Incorruptible, is our own Carlyle's work which appeared nearly three-quarters of a century ago and less than fifty years after the events recorded. Mignet and Thiers had shown him the way, but in spite of their relatively lifeless works he may well be called the pioneer of attempts to make the Revolution a fact and not a wild nightmare to Europe. And Carlyle's is still the greatest and most impressive picture of the portent he described, and that although the modern science of historical research was almost in its infancy in 1837 and although Carlyle, save for some stray memoirs, had few sources of information upon which to rely. But he had his own great gift of divination, his wonderful power of stripping the trappings off a man's soul so that he appeared alive and real and not a mere catalogue of qualities, and more than all his own intense convictions to warm and hearten everything he touched. Mr. Belloc may sneer at Carlyle for inaccuracies of detail, and it is undeniable that since he wrote vast masses of material and unsuspected points of view have been disclosed; nevertheless, his book still remains the best groundwork on which to build our conception of the Revolution as an episode in history. More than that, it has never been shaken as an essentially just and right representation of the main influences and personalities that were manifested in the Revolution. In the psychology of the crowd, that most marked of all the revolutionary phenomena, Carlyle was supreme. He had, it is true, little sympathy with the Girondins, and there perhaps he fails; but as for Danton, Marat, Robespierre and poor Louis XVI, they may be further elucidated by additional information, yet their main outlines remain for ever fixed by his prophetic vision.

Since Carlyle only one English historian of note has followed his footsteps in treating the Revolution as a whole. Mr. Morse Stephens, though not to be compared with Carlyle either as a writer or for his power of gripping a subject and riveting the reader's attention with his presentation of it, has nevertheless rendered an immense service to scholarship and to the comprehension of the Revolution by his luminous volumes. His genius consists in discovering the rational explanation of

extraordinary occurrences like the Terror, in his intuitive comprehension of the actual system of government at times when to the generality of observers everything seemed involved in a mere chaos of anarchy, and in his subtle analysis of the chief characters' motives and disposition according to the normal standard of workaday life. His faults are, first, an exaggerated prejudice in favour of the extreme Jacobins, partly, no doubt, due to a reaction against Taine's contrary bias; and, secondly, if one may so put it, a common-sense view of the time carried to such an excess that the real glamour, the terror and the magnificence of the period melt away under his hands. A true historian of the Revolution must needs be at least half a poet—and Mr. Morse Stephens has hardly anything at all of the poet in him. But in spite of its defect it is a sound and almost a great work, and it is a real loss that nearly twenty years have now passed since the second volume broke off abruptly before the death of Robespierre. Since then the author has migrated to America and to other historical pastures. Nevertheless, it may still be hoped that his leisure moments have been preparing as a welcome surprise the concluding volumes of his work.

France herself has naturally contributed most to the history of her own Revolution, but there is a marked difference between the works preceding the Franco-Prussian War and those since that date. Of the former, Thiers and Mignet are uninspiring, and now held of little account; while Lamartine's turgid and pontifical 'Histoire des Girondins' barely survived the momentary enthusiasm which greeted its first appearance. Michelet's alone of the complete histories of the Revolution published before 1870 still remains a classic. For, in spite of the author's inaccuracies and partly perhaps owing to his bias, the Revolution was a very real phenomenon to him, stirring in his soul the eloquence and enthusiasm which survive in his words. He had, moreover, strong faith and that necessary equipment of a true historian—a poet's appreciation of great events and insight into character; and—he was very French. But of all the mid-Victorian authors in France, Balzac, little as he wrote directly about the Revolution, understood it best, and gives the most illuminating view of its underlying causes and its social manifestations in his great series of novels on contemporary French society. Still, it is a significant fact that all the most important constructive work on the Revolution has appeared since the Third Republic once more struck the shackles of the *raison d'état* from men's minds.

No nation more than the French requires sudden upheavals and uprootings of tradition at not too infrequent intervals in

order to keep before itself a vivid impression of the facts and realities of life. This arises from their clear logic and the national love for clean-cut theories and systems. They like to choose their path with some deliberation and with a careful envisaging of the goal to which it appears to be tending. And once having chosen the path, they plunge forward along it, looking neither to the right nor to the left, but supremely confident that it is bound to go on always in the direction in which it started towards the goal. Obstacles in the way are cut down without pity and with consummate courage, but it needs some *impasse* or yawning chasm of destruction to remind them that the path itself may have gone astray and have twisted and turned away from the appointed mark. Then indeed they reconsider the whole position, take their bearings, and start anew, refreshed from their bath in realities, with ever-undaunted perseverance. If their direction is true from the start, no nation arrives at the goal with greater rapidity and enthusiasm ; but for once that they achieve this object with the first rush, twenty times they have to waste time in retracing their steps or cutting down obstacles needlessly encountered ; whereas the more plodding and less enthusiastic Teutonic nations, carefully considering with each step whether they are still in the right direction, go more slowly but have fewer mistakes to rectify. The whole course of the Revolution is an illustration of this characteristic. You find them starting for universal peace and the brotherhood of men, but their path leads them so far astray that they plunge into war with half Europe to ensure peace, and to remove the human obstacles to brotherly love cut off the heads of more citizens than any tyrant ever executed in so short a time. They aim at toleration for all creeds, and the way chosen to achieve this forces them to hound most of the priests, whom large portions of the people trust, from their homes and even from the country. In civil government their goal is a pure democracy, but their steps to this end are so ill-chosen and so precipitate that they find themselves brought up short by inextricable obstacles, and their only escape along a by-path which brings them to a harder despotism than that of any of their kings. Or, to come down to more recent times: well-nigh the whole nation rushed headlong into the belief that the Jew Dreyfus was a traitor, refusing to listen to the facts crying out to them on each side of the road they were travelling—a state of mind aptly illustrated by a country barber of our acquaintance, who declared as his reason for losing touch with the changing aspects of The Affair, ' Moi je ne lis plus les journaux parce que tous les insultes ' qu'on y lit contre l'armée me font mal au ventre,'—till at last

they found themselves in the quagmire of lies and scandals which terminated the affair. Then they scrambled out of it and again courageously started on their way. Probably no other nation would have allowed the miscarriage of justice to continue so long, but having done so, none would so whole-heartedly have admitted itself to be in the wrong.

No event since the French Revolution itself has so awakened that astonishing nation as the disaster of 1870. Once more after a long course not so much of torpor as of thoughtless self-confidence, they turned to grapple with realities, to take stock of the weak places and the shams in their condition, and to attempt to bring it into closer connexion with the facts of life. This process, which has been more lasting than in many previous manifestations, has nowhere shown such good results as in the regeneration of the historical school in France, now one of her greatest glories. Laborious and exact without pedantry, luminous and logical whilst retaining all the fire of enthusiasm and a full appreciation of truth, this school is now the foremost in Europe for its qualifications and its achievements. Two subjects, closely connected with each other, have especially interested French historians since 1870—the Revolution and Napoleon. No one author indeed gives a complete view of the whole period from 1789 to 1815, but Taine, Sorel, Aulard, Houssaye, Masson and Vandal between them leave little more to be said on the main forces which determined the Revolution and the Napoleonic reaction, or on the main course of events affecting France both within and outside her borders. Supporting and amplifying these general surveys stands almost a library of biographies and of special treatises and monographs on details such as the finance, the army, the religious movements, the social side, and even the dresses and meals of the time. Naturally the materials for all these works were to a great extent available before ; the importance of this literature lies in the fact that it comes out under the auspices of that scholarly band of historians belonging to the Third Republic, trained to discriminate on the value of evidence without losing the traditional precision and literary charm of French men of letters.

In England, where the efforts and results of French and German scholarship are singularly little appreciated, Taine still remains almost the only one of this constellation of writers on the Revolution at all known except by professed students. The reasons for this may be that, being one of the earliest of the moderns, he has had time to penetrate, and also that he paid us the compliment of writing a good deal about English subjects. But, however that may be, it is somewhat unfortunate that it

should be so, for he is not the most satisfactory writer on the Revolution. His analytical disposition tempted him, whether it were an individual or a system he was discussing, to turn a keener vision on defects than on merits ; and, magnificent as he is in his marshalling of details, he is less brilliant in reproducing the concerted picture which those details were intended to form. He also had that failing commonly found in the mere student of events, whose life has been divorced from practical experience, of being less and less enamoured of a phenomenon the more closely he studied it. He is out of sympathy with the Revolution and consequently leaves in the mind an impression of negation rather than of the great constructive fact, which the Revolution undoubtedly was. Take, for example, that wonderfully eloquent comparison of France in revolution to the drunken man with which the volume entitled ' Anarchie' closes :

' Il est une maladie étrange qui se rencontre ordinairement dans les quartiers pauvres. Un ouvrier surmené de travail, misérable, mal nourri, s'est mis à boire ; tous les jours il boit davantage et des liqueurs plus fortes . . . Une heure arrive où le cerveau, frappé d'un coup soudain, cesse de mener la machine : il a beau commander, il n'est plus obéi ; chaque membre, chaque articulation, chaque muscle, agissant à part et pour soi, sursaute convulsivement par des secousses discordantes. Cependant l'homme est gai ; il se croit millionnaire, roi, aimé et admiré de tous ; il ne sent pas le mal qu'il se fait, il ne comprend pas les conseils qu'on lui donne, il refuse les remèdes qu'on lui offre, il chante et crie pendant des journées entières, et surtout il boit plus que jamais.—A la fin son visage s'assombrit, et ses yeux s'injectent. Les radieuses visions ont fait place aux fantômes monstrueux et noirs ; il ne voit plus autour de lui que des figures menaçantes, des traîtres qui s'embusquent pour tomber sur lui à l'improviste, des meurtriers qui lèvent le bras pour l'égorger, des bourreaux qui lui préparent des supplices, et il lui semble qu'il marche dans une mare de sang. Alors il se précipite, et pour ne pas être tué, il tue. . . . De même la France, épuisée de jeûnes sous la monarchie, énivrée par la mauvaise eau-de-vie du Contrat social et de vingt autres boissons frelatées ou brûlantes, puis subitement frappée de paralysie à la tête. . . .'

This is indeed a marvellous simile that seizes upon the imagination and abides there. But surely it also indicates a bankruptcy of the author's historical sense to see nothing further either in the glorious aspirations and the glorious deeds of the Revolution or in its outbursts of savagery than the aimless and besotted titubations of a drunkard.

The fact is that Taine, with all his wealth of detail and his careful investigation into causes, left some of the most important out of account. Chief among these was the marked influence

of the reactionary spirit both from within France and from without on the course of the Revolution. A recognition of this fact explains on rational grounds, if it does not always excuse, many of those manifestations of violence which seemed to Taine the merely brutal aberrations of a nation lost to all self-control. It is indeed worth noting, as Quinet did, the intimate connexion in time between each act of menace to France's nascent liberties and each marked act of violence during the first four years of the Revolution. Thus the storming of the Bastille was the answer to the Royal Session of June 1789 with its attempt to render the States General impotent; the Feast of the Orangery was quickly followed in October by the riotous procession to Versailles; and on June 20 in the year 1792 when the mob invaded the Tuileries, and on August 10 when they stormed it and put an end to the monarchy, they were showing their resentment at Louis XVI's attempt to govern against the will of the Assembly and at the Duke of Brunswick's insolent manifesto. The Prussian successes and the fear that while the men were away on the frontier the disaffected capital might rise, undoubtedly prompted the September massacres, and again defeats of the Republican forces and the coalition against France were significantly close in time to the establishment of the Committee of Public Safety, the execution of the Queen, and to the Terror. This relation of France in revolution to European history generally, up to his time almost neglected, was the special study of Sorel, that statesman among historians, who not only in his great work on 'L'Europe et la Révolution 'Française' but also in his willing labours at L'Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques taught successive generations of some of the foremost among the young men of France the patriotic need for them to look outside themselves and make France great by opening their eyes to the world around her, and by studying the influence of Europe on her destinies. Lastly, M. Aulard has brought out in his 'Histoire Politique de la Révolution' a third aspect of the Revolution also much neglected—its great constructive work. Too many popular writers had previously been disposed to think of the initial years of the Revolution as a period of noisy declamation and high-falutin' sentiment only redeemed from unreality by savage blood-baths. Carlyle of course lent some colour by his authority to this view. M. Aulard shows how the revolutionary governments laid well and truly the still unshaken foundations of a new order of society which has not been confined to France alone; how they introduced systems of national property and national education, a more equal distribution of inheritance and a uniform civil code to replace the

previous maze of regulations. And he also makes clear the measures taken to secure uniformity in the national efforts to resist invasion and to form a government so strong that discontent at home should no longer have power to comfort the enemies on the frontier. He elaborates too a theory which, though not to be pressed unduly, has considerable suggestiveness, that the most important events of the Revolution were not the work of any specially distinguished individuals of heroic calibre, but of the French people rendered articulate and effective not as a multitude but in organised groups. As he puts it somewhat paradoxically, it was not Danton, Robespierre, or Carnot who saved the nation and gave it unity, but the grouping of Frenchmen into sections and popular clubs. 'It 'was the municipal and Jacobin organisations which thrust 'back the European coalition against France.'

In the English works noticed at the head of this article some results of recent French researches on revolutionary history are made accessible to English readers. The volume of the 'Cambridge Modern History' follows the now familiar lines of this series. It has never seemed to us a tolerable method of producing history to allot closely connected periods and subjects to a miscellaneous collection of writers. Lord Acton, it is true, was the originator of the scheme, and we are quite prepared to admit that it might conceivably have been a success if he had lived to inspire each volume and mould it in accordance with his own masterful genius. Dumas certainly succeeded in imposing on the public as his handiwork a great many stories manufactured by his 'shades'; but then he himself was always there to dictate the main lines of such novels and to put on them the finishing touches of genius. In the art of painting also Rubens certainly fathered much which was not altogether his own handiwork, although here again the work of others was no doubt chiefly confined to the filling in of details. And even in these cases *cognoscenti* claim, and probably rightly claim, that they can always distinguish between the productions of the master's unaided hand and those in which he was merely collaborating with his pupils. But even if Lord Acton had been alive to draw the *disjecta membra* of these volumes closer together than the present trio of editors seems able to do, we still think that his conception in scheming such a history was fundamentally unsound. It is true that man's life is limited, while the sources of history seem to become almost inexhaustible as the age of the printing press advances; and that in itself is a good reason for encouraging monographs on special side tracks of history in order to evolve order out of the confused mass of detail

concerning isolated points. But for a complete and satisfying account of any period or outstanding manifestation of human energy, even more important than the accurate presentation of every detail is the harmonious welding of them into the one consistent survey which we believe must be the work of one brain alone. Doubtless each atom which goes to compose the *moles* of history must be well compacted and cleared of superfluous dross, but the one *mens agitans molem* must be present to give life, reality, and conviction. Better the restricted view and the prejudices of a Carlyle, a Michelet, a Taine or a Sorel than the dissipated accuracy of the essayists who compose this *cento* of history. The former at least give a definite impression of the events as they appear to one man ; and, since they happen to be men of genius, the impression is alive and therefore can always be interpreted and perchance corrected by the prejudices of the reader ; the latter give a series of views which leave out of account the essential unity of the subject.

As to the workmanship of this particular section of the 'Cambridge History,' it appears to us distinctly inferior for the most part to that of the more recent volume on the Eighteenth Century. The two authors to whom a very large share of the volume is allotted, Professor Montague and Mr. Moreton Macdonald, are uninspiring writers with a dogmatically didactic style more suited to the schoolroom than to what we imagine to be the public, for whom this series is intended. Dr. Holland Rose, however, in the latter part of the volume makes Napoleon and his campaigns live, while the short chapter on Brumaire by Mr. H. A. L. Fisher causes regret that he has not taken a greater part in the venture. Mr. Higgs's clear and succinct accounts of the financial systems both of the Ancien Régime and of the Revolution also deserve a special word of praise. But generally speaking this volume, unlike that on the Eighteenth Century, is not so exhaustive as one would expect a compilation of this character to be. To take one or two details at random which seem to have been insufficiently treated or ignored : the flight to Varennes, one of the most important turning-points in the Revolution, is barely alluded to in two chapters by different authors, and the only reference in the index is to the more cursory of these allusions. It certainly deserves a full description and discussion. Again, for any correct view of the state of society, and especially of the Court previous to the Revolution, mention at least should have been made of such incidents as those of the Diamond Necklace and Beaumarchais' 'Mariage de 'Figaro.' Such omissions are no doubt the result of employing specialists ; the subjects do not come within the purview of the

writer engaged on that department, and they therefore fall to the ground. Lavish praise, however, may be bestowed on one feature of this, and indeed of the other volumes of the series. The very full bibliographies, both for the whole period and for special aspects of the Revolution, almost in themselves make the work worth possessing by the student desirous of prosecuting his inquiries. The only criticisms we would offer—and they are slight—are, first, that Lamartine's 'Histoire des Girondins,' a famous book in its day, deserves some place in the list of authors; secondly, that the date of first publication for books which have often been republished, such as Thiers, Michelet and Mignet, would be a useful guide in many instances to the student anxious to see at a glance the relative dates of his authorities, though naturally the date of the edition recommended should also be given; and, thirdly, that if space and time could be found for very short estimates of the relative worth and tendency of books quoted, this would add greatly to the value of the bibliographies. The bibliographies at the end of Mr. Trevelyan's volumes on Garibaldi are rendered ten times more useful than they would be otherwise by the adoption of this method.

Mr. Belloc, whose three volumes we also notice, displays in his latest work on 'Marie Antoinette' a somewhat studied insolence to this volume of the 'Cambridge History.' He does not condescend to give reasons for this attitude, although he declares that his chief motives for withholding his notes 'rectifying its 'more glaring errors' were the excessive length to which they had grown and his fear that the public he is addressing would take little interest in the 'misfortunes of official academic 'history.' Mr. Belloc is no doubt a sound judge of his own public, but he would earn greater respect from scholars if he abstained from such charges as long as he does not substantiate them. The fact is that one of the distinguishing marks of Mr. Belloc's writing is a juvenile arrogance or *ὕβρις* which instead of diminishing seems to increase with advancing years. In Danton, his first volume on French revolutionary characters, he is comparatively modest, but during the intervening decade, without any evident increase of solid study or of judgement, he has grown to obtrude his own personality, and to air his irrelevant personal opinions to a degree ill-calculated to conciliate respect. On religious matters, especially, Mr. Belloc is fond of displaying his intolerant Roman Catholicism with quite unnecessary offensiveness to sects with which he disagrees. His view of Necker, for example, corresponds with the ordinarily accepted view that he was immensely overrated in the early days of

the Revolution, but the case against him is not in the least strengthened by constant insinuations that his Calvinistic religion and his Genevese origin account for his obliquities. ‘ He was a product of Geneva, a money-dealer therefore, and ‘ a Calvinist by birth and trade ’ are words which set the whole tone of his description of Necker, amplified by the suggestion that the circumstance of his being ‘ a very Huguenot ’ prevented his having any ‘ moral reputation, as the Catholic French under-‘ stand the term.’ The Huguenots and French Protestants generally have had black sheep among them, but these are no more characteristic of their religion than some of the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Louis XVI’s time, stigmatised by Mr. Belloc, or some of the more shady ‘ bien pensants ’ of more recent times are the true repositories of ‘ moral reputation,’ as understood by Roman Catholic Frenchmen. Not content with this attack on Calvinists, Mr. Belloc must needs drag in the Dreyfus case. The affair of the Diamond Necklace is made for no very obvious reason a peg for Mr. Belloc to expose his fairly well-known anti-Semitic prejudices, and to hint not obscurely that what he calls the ‘ Dreyfus Innocencies ’ were as little worthy of belief as the guiltlessness of the Cardinal de Rohan. In the course of the parallel between the two cases, which haunts a fair number of his pages, the maligned Catholic Society of France is contrasted with the bugbear of Jewish finance, and we are told as a matter of common knowledge that Esterhazy was bribed by the English press to make certain unspecified statements. Mr. Belloc may be perfectly correct in his view of the Dreyfus case, though he has not much evidence to go upon ; but at any rate its obtrusion is a piece of impertinence in an account of Marie Antoinette only explicable by an apparently fixed belief in the author that his own personal views are more interesting than his subject. Some authors’ self-revelations and personal ebullitions are interesting and illuminating to the subject which they are discussing. Too often, however, Mr. Belloc’s seem introduced for no other conceivable object but to attract attention to himself. For example, about Valmy he tells us ‘ I know the place, and have well comprehended ‘ the conditions of soil and of gunnery under which the Prussian ‘ charge failed even before its onset . . . but,’ he adds, ‘ neither ‘ the limits nor the nature of my subject permit me ’ to describe it. If so, why drag in the notorious fact that Mr. Belloc served as a gunner in the French artillery ? There is point in Carlyle’s reminders to the reader that he himself has visited the country where Frederick conducted his campaigns, for the fact adds a touch of reality to his descriptions ; but why should any mortal

wish to know that Mr. Belloc has visited the field of Valmy if there is no space to explain the battle? Again, the egotism of the preface to 'Robespierre' might tickle the interest if it came from a Gibbon, but when measured by the achievement of the book itself hardly avoids the appearance of impertinent bombast.

Mr. Belloc indeed as an historian falls between two stools. He takes some credit to himself on the one hand that he has not pursued original research and wages a quite reasonable war against the pedants who forget human nature in their too close adherence to documents. At the same time he makes considerable parade, especially in the two later books, of his own critical labours, which, when he condescends to explain his methods, do not give a very high idea of his powers of discrimination. Take, for example, a long note which he devotes to destroying Croker's contention that Mdlle. de Robespierre's 'Memoirs' were spurious. At the outset he is met by the fact that Mr. Morse Stephens, admittedly 'the only Englishman 'thoroughly acquainted with the history of the Revolution,' dismisses them cavalierly in a footnote as 'worthless,' but he thinks this authority is sufficiently disposed of by his discovery that Croker's volume on the subject in the British Museum contains Mr. Morse Stephens' name on the fly-leaf—a proof that the volume once belonged to Mr. Morse Stephens, and that in this instance he 'merely followed the authority of Croker'! Again, look at his discussion of the authenticity of 'Marie 'Antoinette's last letter.' In the first place, it may be remarked that if the letter is genuine and of as great importance as Mr. Belloc maintains, he ought to have printed the whole of it instead of giving merely the facsimile of the first page, for it is certainly not well known in England, and since, as he says, it differs from all other letters of Marie Antoinette, it should be valuable for an appreciation of her character. It must be admitted that Mr. Belloc gives with perfect fairness seven almost insurmountable reasons for treating the letter as spurious, and only four for his own belief that it is genuine:

1. That the writing corresponds with admitted letters.
2. That the faults of grammar and spelling are not slavishly copied from one other admitted letter.
3. That so close an imitation of an old letter was not within the scope of the forger's art when the letter was first produced in 1815.
4. That Mr. Belloc himself is convinced of its authenticity.

These reasons, and especially the last, lead to the triumphant deduction that 'no other conclusion is possible to a student 'unless, like any Don, he prefers a sceptical hypothesis to the

'testimony of his eyes and the judgement of his common sense.' As a last example of Mr. Belloc's critical method may be quoted the proof which he attempts to obtain from Robespierre's notes for St. Just's accusation of Danton that Robespierre only yielded under pressure to the demand for Danton's execution. The notes are stated to be unique in containing very few erasures and corrections and being evidently written in haste; therefore, concludes Mr. Belloc, Robespierre only consented at the last moment to this step. It is true there are other arguments given for this view, which is also rendered possible by our knowledge of Robespierre's character; but it must be confessed that such an argument as that from the handwriting of the notes seems almost puerile and might, if Mr. Belloc had been so minded, have been turned to prove exactly the opposite conclusion, that Robespierre's ferocity in this instance entirely overcame his habitual caution and circumspection.

Perhaps, however, we have been unfair in taking Mr. Belloc's volumes too seriously as original contributions to history; if we have, it must be attributed largely to his own somewhat ambitious and pontifical manner, a weakness to which journalists are peculiarly prone. In reality they are very good journalism, and illustrate many of the strong and the weak points of that fine profession. There is nothing remarkably new, either in the treatment of his subjects or in his point of view. When one tries to sum up what Mr. Belloc has told us about Danton, Robespierre, and even Marie Antoinette, one finds that there is very little changed in our conceptions of those persons gathered from Carlyle, Lord Morley, and many other well-known writers. A good deal indeed of the same material is much better put in older writers. The scene of Louis XV.'s dying agony in 'Marie Antoinette' would, one may safely affirm, never have been written had it not been for Carlyle's wonderful irony on the same subject; and the irony of the great writer finds a poor substitute in Mr. Belloc's mawkish description of the passing of the Host and of Louis XV's penitence. When Carlyle closes his passage on Robespierre's execution with the words 'May 'God be merciful to him and to us!' they are really impressive from such a man; when Mr. Belloc closes his with 'God have 'mercy on his soul and on each of ours who hope for better 'things,' they suggest far less solemn thoughts, and that not merely because they are an obvious, even if not conscious, reproduction of the greater writer's words. Again, a great many pages of both 'Danton' and 'Robespierre' are summed up in Lamartine's two sentences: 'Robespierre avait cet avantage 'sur Danton, que sa passion était infatigable parcequ'elle était

'impersonnelle. Danton était un homme, Robespierre était une 'idée.' There are other instances of a false sentimentality and a straining after-effect in these volumes, more especially in the latest on Marie Antoinette, where we have already noted the description of Louis XV's last sacrament. In the second chapter an absurdly irrelevant account of the earthquake at Lisbon, interspersed with a good deal of rather forced sentiment, is introduced for the sole reason that Maria Theresa's heralds were at that time in Lisbon to ask the King and Queen of Portugal to stand as godparents to Marie Antoinette. In the last chapter the author has a laudable desire to establish the connexion between the Queen's execution and the progress of the war on the frontier. But he does not really make his point any clearer, while he confuses both stories, by sandwiching together throughout the chapters descriptions of the campaign and the trial. Like many journalists, he is tempted to over-emphasis by fear that the hasty reader may miss his point: this is really a clumsy device to cover the absence of a well-thought-out plan of writing. Thus Mr. Belloc spoils some of his best descriptions—and he can describe admirably when he chooses—by interrupting them to discourse on points which should be remembered by the reader and which should all have been made clear before. For example, Danton's attack on Lafayette is cut into and loses half its effect by an interpolation about the causes of Danton's and Lafayette's mutual distrust, and similarly the remarkably impressive account of Robespierre's last appearance at the convention is all but ruined at the start by a long disquisition on points which should have been made clear at an earlier stage of the narrative. This itch for over-emphasis, due to the necessary haste of journalists' work, is nowhere better revealed than in the *naïf* footnote attached by Mr. Belloc to the following passage. We quote the paragraph in full as an illustration of the writer's style at its worst. He is not always so slipshod.

'In that cold and ill-lit hour was let loose the fury of the governments of Europe, closed the neutrality of England and sacrificed the sympathy of America. When the door was unlocked and Robespierre reappeared among men it was to face problems and a turmoil which he had in part let loose, he that had so consistently opposed the armed crusade. Then a fortnight and France was at war with the whole world.*

* 'An exaggeration.'

On the other hand, Mr. Belloc shows many of the best qualities of journalism. He has been quick to recognise the awakening interest in France of the revolutionary period and to educate the

British public by whetting their appetite for the new discoveries of historical science. He has worked diligently at the masses of material accumulated by scholars, and has given his own interpretation of them in facile form. And he brings some special qualifications to his task. He knows France well, and his French blood enables him to interpret faithfully some of the many aspects of that wonderful people. He was, moreover, brought up in many of the traditions and sentiments still surviving of the revolutionary epoch :

'By such influences my own childhood and youth were in part surrounded. Even after a hundred years something in the flesh remained of it. Remote and secluded there were characters which held to the tradition ; women from whom I heard of their fathers in the guard of the Palace, and men strictly formed in what had once been the new stoicism of the Emile and fixed and anchored backwards to the legend of Diderot and the hard crystal of the Encyclopædia. I should, then, be able to show what influences they were that trained the early manhood of Robespierre ; what that generation was whose every impress he received and of whose salvation in Rousseau it was his in particular to make an exalted and irrefragable creed.'

More than this, he has a very good working idea, expressed in the preface to 'Danton,' of the true method of approaching history. The passage is too long to quote, nor is it a very lucid exposition of what we take to be at the bottom of Mr. Belloc's mind ; but in effect it comes to this : that sympathy is above all essential for the historian ; he must understand and explain his hero or his epoch so fundamentally that no recorded action of the one or manifestation of the other will jar with his representation ; and further that in order to attain this sympathy the chief thing is to discover the underlying ideals and convictions of the person or the period. So far as he goes Mr. Belloc is undoubtedly in sympathy with his characters, not in the sense of approving of all they do but in showing how they came to act as they did, and putting the best construction on their performances when judged by their antecedents and their circumstances. Moreover, he can so tell his story as to hold the concentrated attention of his readers from his first page to his last—a gift not possessed by all historians, even amongst those who add distinctly to our knowledge.

We have said that Mr. Belloc adds little that is essential to our former conceptions of Danton, of Robespierre, and of Marie Antoinette ; at the same time he amplifies them, and in the case of Robespierre makes him perhaps more human. Danton is naturally his favourite of the three. Eloquent, vigorous, and

impetuous, fond of good cheer and of fair women, but a slave to neither, Rabelaisian in his language and unscrupulous in his actions so long as they were essential for the safety of the State, subject to sudden collapses after almost superhuman energy, in power careless of conciliating opinion from a joyous confidence in his own strength and sound sense, when fallen treating his adversaries like yapping curs, he and Mirabeau were the only dominating figures produced by the Revolution until Napoleon arose, and of the two he was the greater because simpler and more direct. Very French in his strength and in his weakness, he might well have said with Henri IV in similar circumstance, 'Paris vaut bien une messe,' while both in circumstance and in character there is much to connect the names of Danton and Gambetta in French history. Both made armies out of untrained and inexperienced levies, both restored to France her self-respect when danger and disgrace seemed to encompass her, and both, when they seemed destined to reap success by a glorious ministry of peace, collapsed completely. The one black stain on Danton's career was his silence during the September massacres. Mr. Belloc defends him even there, on the ground that no man could have stopped them. But, according to eye witnesses, two hundred men at most took part in these horrors, while Danton was Minister of Justice at the time and the most powerful man in France. It is absurd to say that the man who raised tens of thousands of Frenchmen by the mere sound of his voice, who persuaded the Prussians to quit France by his wonderful diplomacy, could not have stopped these curs. It is indeed often said that these massacres were needed to save the State by thoroughly cowing the reactionaries; that may be so, but at any rate the horrible way in which they were carried out by butchers drunk with blood and yet paid for the work was a disgrace to Danton and to the France he loved so well.

It is no mean achievement to have maintained interest in Robespierre throughout a whole volume as Mr. Belloc has done, and that without the aid of new documents and *pièces justificatives* which render M. Hamel's immense work so important. For of all the men who ever attained great notoriety in affairs of State, Robespierre is incomparably the dullest and shoddiest. An academic interest may attach itself to the question how such a man became so great in the eyes of the world; and perhaps Mr. Belloc's success in this volume, certainly the best of the three before us, lies in his elaborate investigation of the problem. Many authors have tried their hands at Robespierre, the best known in England being Carlyle, Lord Morley, and Taine. All agree in the general picture, the only difference is in the degree

of irony with which he is treated. Carlyle says of him that he was 'a man fitted, in some luckier settled age, to have become 'one of those incorruptible barren Pattern-Figures and have had 'marble-tablets and funeral-sermons'; Lord Morley that 'the 'Convention would have yawned if it had not trembled under 'him'; but the most mordant and unsympathetic of all the sketches of the 'Sea-green Incorruptible' is that of his own countryman Taine. At that Fête de l'Etre suprême where 'le 'peuple de comparses, qui défile devant une montagne allégorique, 'fait des gestes indiqués, pousse les cris commandés, sous l'œil 'd'Henriot et de ses gendarmes, et à l'heure dite éprouve les 'émotions prescrites,' where, to that word of command, 'les 'citoyens jetteront des fleurs à chaque station, les pères em-'brasseront leurs enfants, les mères élèveront les yeux au ciel,' Robespierre himself, the central figure, is thus characterised :

'Ni Molière dans son Tartufe, ni Shakespeare dans son Richard III, n'ont osé mettre en scène l'hypocrite convaincu de sa sincérité et le Caïn qui se croit Abel. Le voici sur une scène colossale, en présence de cent mille spectateurs, le 8 juin 1794, au plus beau jour de sa gloire. . . . Deux personnages sont en lui, comme dans la Révolution qu'il représente, l'un apparent, étalé, extérieur, l'autre inavoué, dissimulé, intime, et le second recouvert par le premier.'

Even more savage in its bitterness is this picture of Robespierre at home in his lodgings with the Duplay family :

'Là, dans une de ces familles où la demi-bourgeoisie confine au peuple, parmi des âmes neuves sur lesquelles les idées générales et les tirades oratoires ont toute leur prise, il a trouvé des adorateurs ; on boit ses paroles ; on a pris de lui l'opinion qu'il a de lui-même ; pour tous les gens de la maison, mari, femme et filles, il est le grand patriote, le sage infaillible ; soir et matin, il rend des oracles, il respire un nuage d'encens, il est un dieu en chambre. Pour arriver jusqu'à lui les croyants font queue dans la cour ; admis un à un dans le salon, ils se recueillent devant ses portraits au crayon, à l'estompe, au bistre, à l'aquarelle, devant ses petits bustes en terre rouge ou grise ; puis sur un signe de sa main à travers la porte vitrée, ils pénètrent dans le sanctuaire où il trône, dans le cabinet réservé où son principal buste, accompagné de vers et de devises, le remplace quand il est absent ; '

and then by a refinement of irony Taine tries to imagine the conversations at the evening meals of this quiet household, at a time when the tumbrils were daily carrying forty or fifty human loads past the house to the guillotine, and adds in despair 'Seul 'aujourd'hui, Robert Browning pourrait reconstituer le dessus

'et le dessous de ces entretiens, le soir, devant la mère et les 'jeunes filles.'

The great secret of Robespierre's success at such a time was his apparent consistency. 'Le peuple rend justice à ses vertus 'austères ; il observe qu'il n'a jamais changé d'opinion depuis 'la Révolution,' is a sentence in a police report of December 1793, and no more damning verdict could be passed on a man who pretended to ride the whirlwind and direct the storm in such tempestuous days. Ironbound consistency at such a time is only another name for weakness, for such consistency takes no account of shifting times and tempers. The self-centred broodings of a hermit unrelated to life are erected into a guide for dealing with the passionate wants and aspirations of a vigorous humanity. The crowd presses and drives such a man whither it wills, leaving him only his abstract consistency to hug in his secret hours. So it was with Robespierre : he could never meet the urgent need, he never had a remedy to propose for the ills of the time, he accepted the violence and the iniquities of any strong man brought to the top in the hope that when the fury was past his own theories would find the way cleared for them. He fell because by a just irony he had become so identified with the means which he no doubt abhorred quite sincerely that he was regarded as their author and their principal instigator. Thus the man who in youth resigned a petty judgeship from disgust at sentencing a man to death was brought to the guillotine by the fear implanted in men's souls of the Great Terror carried out when he was thought supreme. The merit of Mr. Belloc's book lies not so much in any new fact that it tells, but in the skill with which it saves Robespierre from his too frequent fate in history, of seeming a mere inhuman monster and a subject of epigram. In a word, Mr. Belloc puts him in his right place as a living and very weak man, not indeed a coward, as Mr. Macdonald calls him, but driven by the blasts of fate, understanding little of the world and much amazed—'a jejune, persistent mind.'

In a short sketch of the revolutionary period published by Mr. Morse Stephens in 1893, he asks himself why the Revolution broke out in France sooner than in other countries, and concludes that it was chiefly because the French peasant was more independent and wealthy than elsewhere, because the French middle class was enlightened enough to take the lead, and because Frenchmen had been in possession of so much personal liberty that they were ready to strike a blow for political liberty. These are perhaps rather explanations of the success than of the origin of the Revolution. Throughout Europe there was at this time a reaction amounting almost to a revolution, not so much against

tyranny and privilege as against inefficiency in government. In Sweden Gustavus III carried out the coup d'état which saved the country from anarchy. In Denmark Bernstorff's bloodless revolution of 1784 destroyed a *régime* disastrous for its feebleness, Pombal's long despotism had restored commerce and enterprise in Portugal, while the reforms of Joseph II and of his more tactful brother Leopold in Tuscany were aimed at restoring some correspondence between the machinery of government and the changed realities of the social fabric ; and even in Poland a pathetic attempt was made to save the crumbling forces of the nation by the statesmanlike constitution of 1791. In France more than in any European country, the chief predisposing cause of revolution was the hideous inefficiency of the government to cope with the needs of the nation. It was not so much that the individual rulers were inefficient, but the whole system was out of touch with the changed conditions of society, and no one, save perhaps Turgot, had the sympathy and the genius to realise the need of a thorough remodelling of the processes of government. The Court was a community apart from the rest of the nation ; and in that Court centred the whole government of the country, composed of men like the gods of Olympus in their remoteness from the cares and wants of other mortals but without their omniscience. And, as is generally the case with a despotism inefficient and out of touch with the governed, it was a government too often moved by the caprices of those who lacked the will or the concentration to apply themselves to the sustained business of governing. Of such capricious meddlers was the Queen Marie Antoinette. She, a Hapsburg, had been bred apart in a family with laws of its own, separate from the rest of the world ; but in their own dominions at least the Hapsburgs made their Court no sharers in these privileges, and talked directly with their people of all races. So at Versailles she fell naturally into the privileged ideas of the Court, and became ever further from the life of the world, and, an Austrian, markedly averse from the free censorious ways of the French bourgeoisie. She was not an ill-feeling woman ; 'the soft young heart adopts 'orphans, portions meritorious maids, delights to succour the 'poor—such poor as come picturesquely in her way ; and sets 'the fashion of doing it.' But she must needs also have a hand in affairs of State, fitfully to serve her pleasures or the interests of her family, never with an appreciation of the wants or care for the prejudices of her husband's French subjects. Charming and petulant as a child, with all the impertinence of rank, with a touch of her great-hearted mother's obstinacy but with none of her vision or her ripe tact, she illustrates more completely than any

one person the French Court's hopeless aloofness from the people; and she proved its evil genius. To say that she was a cause of the French Revolution would be an absurd exaggeration, but she was a symptom of one of its chief causes, and greater wisdom in her might have diverted the full violence of its current. Much of this is suggested in the few pregnant phrases of Carlyle about the Queen, and much is fully developed with skill and charm by Mr. Belloc when he can divert his mind from Dreyfus Innocencies, Jew finance, and Calvinistic failings. And keen as he is to see the just causes of antipathy which the French people had against this woman who never took them at their real worth, he speaks of her throughout as a woman, and the most unfortunate of women, with an unfailing chivalry and reticence characteristic of the finest French traditions.

What has the French Revolution done for the world? Has it left nothing behind now that the sound and fury and the savagery, all those irrevocable constitutions, and all those rotund phrases full of high hopes and platitudes have passed into the limbo of things past and forgotten? Is it vain because it was immediately followed first by a bloody and then by a stupid tyranny for France? Because throughout Europe it hardened and strengthened the forces of reaction and repression? Those who like Taine see nothing but the momentary disillusion and the obvious irony of hopes abandoned have little faith in human endeavours and little insight into the forces which rule the world. It may not have proved that the French of that day were fit for democracy, but it gave undying hope and example to the peoples throughout the world. The supreme lesson of the Revolution was not to teach men some new form of government: but rather to teach for the first time by actual fact, even by the spilling of much blood, that all men are equal, if they only care for and are fit to claim this equality, and that real inequalities only come from men's own natures and not from circumstances. The essential and permanent doctrine is in a word summed up in Burns's 'A Man 's 'a Man for a' That.' Philosophers, and notably the cynics of the world, had proclaimed this doctrine throughout the ages and never so vociferously as before 1789, but it needed the complete commingling of classes, the ordeals of blood, the questioning of all claims save the fundamental personality of a man, and the uprooting of all traditions and all institutions to prove it and make it a reality. This equality of opportunity for all is the great work of the French Revolution. It is the work that has survived and, in spite of the necessary roughnesses and imperfections of human institutions, can never be wholly obscured.

Art. VIII.—MINOAN CRETE.

1. Articles on the Excavations at Knossos in the *Annual of the British School at Athens*, the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, *Archæologia*, the *Monthly Review*, &c., &c., from 1900 onwards. By A. J. Evans.
2. *Scripta Minoa, the written documents of Minoan Crete, with special reference to the archives of Knossos.* Vol. I. By A. J. Evans. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1909.*

Ten years have now elapsed since the excavation of the Cretan sites began, years hardly less eventful for the historian of early civilisation than those which witnessed the work of pioneers in the valleys of the Nile and the Euphrates. The end of the second lustre is a natural period in which to pause and survey the field; to inquire how far traditional views and theories have been affected by discoveries which have made another epoch in the history of research; to ask what is their significance for the general study of human culture. To give an answer to such questions it is well to stand back from the arena in which the specialists are still engaged, for the nearer air is still clouded with the dust of the combat. So great has been the recent increase to our knowledge of the ancient world that those who have little time for special study must either confine themselves to salient features or lose themselves in a labyrinth of unfamiliar facts. The plain man will be wise to avoid the definition of Pelasgian and Achaean, and leave undiscussed the bearing of the Sothic Cycle upon the chronology of Crete. In the following pages the attempt will be made to disengage a few results of this new knowledge, born in a great archaeological year, as it were under the sign of Taurus.

When, after the victory of Navarino in 1827, the sculptures of the Parthenon revealed the true range of Hellenic genius, the old standards of criticism were superseded. Lectures were remodelled; manuals were written over again; there was a general revision of opinion, no less irksome to the older generation

* The results of Cretan excavation have been described in the scholarly work of Professor Ronald Burrows, 'The Discoveries in Crete' (London, 1907); in the picturesque account by Dr. Angelo Mosso, 'The Palaces of Crete and their Builders' (London, 1907); and in the excellent summary by Mr. and Mrs. Hawes, 'Crete the Forerunner of Greece' (London, 1909); Mrs. Hawes, when Miss Boyd, herself excavated the site of Gournia. Essays and monographs are too numerous to be mentioned here.

than that which had disturbed their fathers in the days of Winckelmann and Lessing. In the years which have intervened between that time and our own, the exploration of the world has moved so fast, the sheer mass of material has added such momentum to research, that we are now unmoved by revolutions which would have dismayed our predecessors. But even in the province of art and archæology there have been in recent years two sudden extensions of our knowledge which have involved revisions equally extensive. One of these established the commanding position of China in the history of art; the second resulted from the discoveries which have completed the task of Schliemann, and lifted the veil from the ancient civilisation of the Mediterranean. Modern research has disclosed the scope of the older Chinese genius, confirming the dutiful tradition of Japan; China is no longer judged by *chinoiseries*; the extent of the Japanese debt has become obvious to critics in other continents. Until recently the student of history regarded the legends of Minos and his empire with suspicion, and hastened on to more authentic periods. But the excavations at Knossos and Phaestos, at Gournia and Palaikastro, have endowed the allusions to Crete with a new significance; they have vindicated the old stories which proclaimed the island a central hearth of early civilisation, with an influence extending to the shores of Anatolia and Greece. Though the classic art of Hellas depends less wholly upon that of the Aegean than Japanese art upon that of China, it is seen to owe to it some of its most fascinating qualities.

Discoveries like this are not eventful merely to academies or schools of critics; they are significant for the whole body of educated men; nor should the indifference with which we now accept the most startling innovations be suffered to obscure their cardinal importance. They share with the discoveries of physical science the power of bringing home to us the continuity of all developement; they compel the eye to follow the great curves, and search the more distant horizons. On such a site as Hissarlik or Knossos one culture-layer lies upon another, from the deposits of the Stone Age to those of an advanced civilisation. Each stratum represents a period in the history of mankind; each is visibly supported upon that which lies beneath it, from the surface-soil in which the flowers are growing, to the sterile rock which bears the weight of them all. Such a spectacle teaches, perhaps better than anything else in the world, the full meaning of time; the ages are here visibly embodied; they seem themselves exposed before us heaped and stratified like the earth that bears them witness, *monceaux de siècles*, veritable mounds of years. The excavations in Crete, like those which preceded them

in Egypt and Mesopotamia, have enforced the lesson of long succession in culture; they have taught it with even greater effect, because they have happened to expose the foundations beneath a more familiar world. Egypt and Babylon are remote; the ties which unite them to us are indirect. But from Knossos to Mycenae, from Mycenae to Athens, from Athens to Alexandria, Rome and Byzantium, we can trace a clear line of ascent, rising through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance to our own day. With those earlier excavations they share the merit of linking classical and ancient oriental studies to that of the modern science which investigates mankind. They have reaffirmed the truth that neither literary nor philological research can henceforth be detached from the more general study of human culture; they have proved once more that archæology and anthropology are parts of a single co-ordinated discipline. One of the first writers to attempt a synthesis from the new data which Crete has supplied in such bewildering abundance has rightly insisted that the achievement of these ten years represents in a real sense a triumph of the spade over the pen. The men who have performed it have once more discredited the excessive reliance upon linguistic research which has been responsible for much arm-chair anthropology in the past; they have helped to end the sole reign of deductive reasoning about antiquities, and to establish yet more firmly the essential principle of excavation; *spes est una in inductione vera*. They have done this because they have remained in continual touch with concrete things; as a reward it has been granted to them to make good the blanks which even the Greek historians were unable to fill.

The island of Crete, drawn like a seine-net across the Aegean, has always received its share of the wanderers who from remote ages have moved to and fro among the islands; it was among the earliest countries to profit by the growth of maritime commerce. The natural action of social and economic laws ensured to it a rapid prosperity and the early developement of communities skilled in all the arts of life. It is not a mere chance that the oldest Hellenic traditions say so much of Crete; that the cradle of Zeus was placed upon the slopes of Ida; that hardly a single writer of repute from Hesiod down to Horace or Plutarch can avoid making mention of Minos, the king of fabulous wealth and fabled justice, the man 'admitted to share the secret 'thoughts of Jove.' The adventures of Theseus in the Labyrinth, the devotion of Ariadne, the terrors of the Minotaur, these were almost obligatory allusions, inserted by authors from a sense of duty to the cultured reader. Though always a more remote and legendary figure, and even confused with his own

grandson, Minos holds in Greek story a position in some respects analogous to that of Charlemagne in the literature of the later Middle Ages. But by the fame of his wealth there clung about him an additional exotic splendour such as in later times men associated with a Montezuma in Mexico or an Atahualpa in Peru; Knossos, like some fancied El Dorado, was seen through golden mists, a place of marvellous and indescribable riches. The secret of this growth in legend is partly revealed by Herodotus when he says that Polycrates of Samos was the first prince among the Hellenes who gave his mind to the command of the sea, 'except Minos of Knossos.' In other words, Crete grew rich by maritime trade and by the possession of a powerful fleet. The second legendary attribute of Minos, his sense of justice, was probably associated with his name for no less valid reasons. Crete had an ancient reputation as a well-governed country; the Cretan who discourses with the Athenian and the Spartan in Plato's 'Laws' is introduced because later institutions were traditionally descended from others of which the origin had been long forgotten. The great Crete of Greek literature is not the island of liars and lazy gluttons described in the familiar Homeric line, but a wealthy and well-ordered country to which Hellenism lay under admitted obligations. It is this better Crete which the discoveries of Dr. Evans, the members of the Italian archæological mission, the British School at Athens, and an American lady excavator have restored to its proper place in history.

Exception has been taken to the term Minoan adopted by Dr. Evans to describe the civilisation which his discoveries have done so much to reveal. It is argued that the word unduly concentrates attention upon a half-mythical figure whom some have regarded as the destroyer rather than the founder of Cretan prosperity. But objections may be raised against every concise term used to indicate a complex phase of culture or a stage of historical developement; they may be brought with equal force against 'Carolingian' or 'Gothic' or 'Byzantine,' words which the world accepts as equally inaccurate and indispensable. The clipped and scientific term is generally too cold to stir the imagination; it recalls a certain human type which Bacon described as 'precise and incompatible.' In the grey cloudland of theory we need colour and warmth of tone; we require words which glow, which conjure up visions before the mind, and are ineradicable from the memory. These conditions are fulfilled by Minoan, an adjective of archaic sound with syllables of a suave and mysterious movement. The word has the further merit of suggesting that Crete was the true focus of the civilisation which it connotes; it is therefore superior to 'Mycenaean,' which the

Germans, with commendable piety, would retain for its associations with the great work of Schliemann. In the future perhaps the wider term Aegean will come into general use; under it Minoan and Mycenaean may be subsumed to describe successive stages in Mediterranean developement. In the meantime we may retain Dr. Evans's word, and be grateful for its sonority.

It is only possible to indicate in the most abstract manner the main results attained by the researches of these ten eventful years. They have taught us that over northern Africa, the islands, the southern and central zones of Europe, and in Asia Minor, there extended in the later Stone Age a more or less homogeneous culture, characterised by the use of similar implements, weapons, and utensils. In periods before literary record chronology is comparative and not absolute; but it is legitimate to base a conjecture, if not an article of belief, upon the stratification of successive deposits; by methods like these Dr. Evans carries back the later Stone Age in Crete some twelve thousand years. Upon the foundation of the neolithic culture different peoples erected the fabric of their distinctive civilisations, aided or hindered in the task by the various conditions of their environment. In the South, a more genial climate accelerated progress, particular circumstances favouring certain populations or retarding the progress of others. In Egypt, the fertilising Nile produced the wealth which made a great and centralised community. In the Aegean, the islands, bridging the sea from shore to shore, enticed the sailor to maritime trade. The greatest of them, lying in a commanding position between the Asiatic and European coasts, naturally secured the lead, and in process of time, the hegemony. Crete and Egypt developed from similar beginnings; but under the influence of a varying environment the genius of each diverged upon a different path. The mainland country was ruled by a despotic monarchy, organised for war, dominated by a powerful and wealthy priesthood. The island, protected by the sea, dispensed with land defences; its peoples learned independence by maritime adventure. The environing sea, the mountains of Dicte and Ida, those *ὄρεα νιφόεντα* which were landmarks to the Greeks, were not without their effect upon the nature of those who lived beneath them. There was more individualism in Crete than in Egypt; there was less opportunity for the establishment of an over-powerful priesthood. About B.C. 3000, the use of stone, which had lasted perhaps seven thousand years, gave way throughout the Aegean to that of bronze; the new culture based on metal proceeded gradually from the old, and was diffused in the same way over a wide area in the islands and in Europe. During the whole of the third

millennium, Cretan civilisation developed within the sphere of this common culture; its advance was rapid; early relations with the civilisation of Egypt quickened the progress of an inventive and original people. Towards the beginning of the second millennium, the older palaces at Knossos and Phaestos were built, the period being that of the eleventh Egyptian dynasty. At this time begins Dr. Evans's Middle-Minoan period, in which the first great Cretan civilisation flourished; in his Second Middle-Minoan period the older palaces were destroyed after an existence of about three hundred years, the twelfth dynasty then reigning in Egypt. About B.C. 1900–1700 a later palace was built at Knossos above the ruins of the first, and the Middle-Minoan period closed with the foundation of various country towns. The following two hundred years, beginning the Late-Minoan period, saw the second palace begun at Phaestos, the flourishing period of the neighbouring royal villa at Hagia Triada, and the prosperity of the towns of Gournia, Zakro, and Palaikastro; at its close, the eighteenth dynasty had begun in Egypt. Now followed a brief golden age, the Second Late-Minoan or 'Palace' period, lasting less than a century. The later palace at Knossos was modified, intercourse with Egypt, especially in the reign of Thothmes III., was closer and more frequent. But disaster came suddenly; first, perhaps through the incursion of invaders from the North, the coastal towns were conquered; then at the beginning of the third Late-Minoan period, perhaps B.C. 1450, perhaps rather later, the palace of Knossos fell in its turn. The enemy, whoever he was, did not extirpate the population; the character of the remains illustrating this period proves that the old sites were reoccupied by people of the same race, practising under less favourable conditions their ancestral arts, and retaining the usages of the old religion. The fourteenth century was marked by a final decline. Mycenae and Tiryns, which had grown to strength a century earlier, now stood at the head of the Aegean peoples. Troy, the sixth city of Hissarlik, flourished; Crete sank into a secondary position, and never recovered its ancient primacy.

From this skeleton record one fact rises into especial prominence. The 'Mycenaean' civilisation which Schliemann discovered in Greece and Asia Minor, the culture of Mycenae itself, of Tiryns, of Orchomenos, of Troy, is a late developement of the earlier Minoan civilisation diffused from Crete. We may go further, and say that it was a degeneration; it had already proceeded far upon the descending line. More than one writer had suspected that the art of Mycenae was decadent; the discoveries in Crete have proved that in truth it had long passed

its prime. By about B.C. 1200 the glory of the Argolid was also departed; its citadels were destined to fall before a northern people using iron weapons, whose entry into Greece was traditionally described as the Dorian invasion. Many representatives of the older culture fled across the Aegean and joined their kinsfolk already settled on the Asiatic shore. Now began those dark ages of Greek history which lasted for about five hundred years, until in the seventh century the oriental influences of Western Asia combined with late Aegean influences on the coast and in the isles to usher in the archaic period of classical Greek art. In these ages falls the period when the 'Iliad' and the 'Odyssey' were composed. Into the fierce controversy as to the nature of the Homeric culture we need not here enter. There is probably some conscious archaising in the poems, which are reminiscent of the old life before the coming of the Dorians; but the age appears to have been one of transition, in which both bronze and iron weapons were used, a result which may be regarded as natural, since the epics were written in the region of Asia Minor where Mycenaean tradition longest survived. If the Homeric phase stands for the transition, the Mycenaean represents the later Bronze Age in the south of Europe, and the Minoan culture of Crete, the zenith of the Middle Bronze Age. All periods alike were phases of a single movement in which more backward populations also shared each in its degree. The barrow and hill-fort of Western Europe were constructed by peoples whose art was in some measure influenced from the far Aegean; even the steppes of Russia and Western Asia may have felt the reflex of the old Mediterranean civilisation. Like the neolithic culture which had preceded it, the bronze culture was a single organism, sensitive in all its parts to the action of any powerful or central influence.

It has been said that the Minoan dominion was a sea-power, known to the Greeks as a 'thalassocracy.' The absence of defensive works round the palaces of Knossos and Phaestos betrays the conditions under which the princes of Crete maintained their influence. Like the kings of England, they depended upon wooden walls; they were not compelled, as were their successors upon the mainland in Argolis, to fortify their dwellings against invading armies. Cretan civilisation was essentially maritime; the people were familiar with the sea, and expressed their love for it in their decorative art. Theirs was probably a commercial and peaceful civilisation; the legend about the tribute of Athenian youths and maidens, and the Minotaur, suggests indeed a darker side to this culture, but its stability must have rested upon peaceful commerce rather than

upon the assertion of armed strength. In their trading instincts the Minoans manifested the qualities which in former days we associated almost exclusively with the Phoenicians. This brings us to another point in which the Cretan discoveries have modified previous beliefs with regard to the early history of the Mediterranean. The credit of the Phoenicians as lords of the sea has been undermined; just as their service to the art of writing in Greece may prove less exclusive than has commonly been supposed. The magical verses of the 'Odyssey' had invested this people with a reputation which inclined us to see in them the only merchant adventurers of antiquity. In truth they seem to have taken the leavings open to anyone after the decadence of Crete; they had the shakings of the olive tree, not the prime abundance of its fruit. When Knossos had fallen and Mycenae grew weak, the Semite saw his chance, and did not let it pass. The interregnum between the Minoan and the Greek powers became his opportunity; the Mediterranean was *res nullius* and he appropriated it upon sufferance. His captains only sailed into the open waters when the Minoans 'were put 'from the seignory and commandment of the sea'; it was then only that they extended westwards operations hitherto confined to the south-eastern corner of the Mediterranean. Phoenician ships now appear in the offing of every Greek island as we read of them in the 'Odyssey.' But when, about the eighth century, the Hellenes took possession of their own waters, the Phoenicians for the first time adventured beyond them, not because they sought knowledge of a wider world, or loved adventure for itself, but because the trade of nearer seas was gone, and they did not want to fight for it. In the eighth century they disappear as a serious factor in civilisation. They were a people without a great ideal and without an art of their own, compounders of any artistic formula which would find approval in an uncritical market. As merchants and middlemen they played a very practical part in history, but the greater glamour of the Phoenician name is gone. The romance of Phoenicia really lies in the last phase of her history, when her merchants traversed furtively and with apprehension that Mediterranean which for long years they had sailed at their ease. Matthew Arnold compares to the hunted gipsy the Tyrian trader, who at the advent of the intruding Greek 'snatched his rudder and 'shook out more sail,' holding on indignantly until he passed the western straits and uncorded his bales among the Iberians of barbaric Spain. In his defeat the Phoenician becomes a sympathetic figure: but we now perceive that he was once himself the intruder in Minoan waters, and that the true inheritors of

the Minoan spirit were the new masters of the waves who drove him westward to the Pillars of Hercules and the ocean.

The Greeks were indeed the heirs of the old Aegean culture, which in its decay had passed to them with other hereditaments bequeathed by Asiatic peoples. Are we therefore to conclude that the Cretans of the Bronze Age and the Hellenes were of one stock? We here touch upon a complex problem which even now awaits its final solution and cannot in this place be discussed. It is now very generally admitted that Cretan culture in its essentials, in all that contributes to its interest, was not Aryan; when all due allowance is made for contamination at various periods, it may be safely asserted that Indo-Germanic influence never controlled the full course and volume of Cretan civilisation; it came too late to affect it in the mass, or change its natural and intrinsic character. It seems most probable that the Minoan and the Hellene were of unrelated stocks, the one of southern, the other of northern origin; but that the pioneers of these stocks came into contact at an early period. It is probably a mistake to suppose that in the Stone Age men were afraid to wander far abroad; the Mediterranean has always encouraged movement; the islands, like gigantic stepping stones, inspired a longing for adventure. It is therefore unreasonable to suppose that the population of Crete could ever have remained homogeneous, or that the settlements of its extended coasts were all established by a single people. But when this has been duly admitted, it is almost equally clear that there was a predominant type, and that the majority of the people were of a single race. That race was not European. The artistic representations left us by the Aegean peoples themselves, and by the Egyptians who knew their type, allow us to conclude that it was characterised by a comparatively short stature and by dark and abundant hair; the constricted waist, which is a general feature, may be ignored as a result of training and fashion, not a true racial characteristic. The examination of a considerable number of skulls from various Cretan sites permits the further conclusion that the long-headed preponderated over the round-headed inhabitants of the island. The belief of the older school of physical anthropologists in the immutability of cranial forms has been displaced in recent years by the theory that the physical type, including even the conformation of the head, may be radically changed by the influence of a new environment within a comparatively small number of centuries. Nevertheless, the preponderance of dolicocephaly among the most ancient Cretan skulls must be allowed considerable weight; and the evidence

of anthropometry, like that of art, tends to prove that the bulk of the Cretan population was neither Indo-Germanic nor Semitic. Philology, so far as it goes, supports this theory; the termination in *nth*, for example, is widely distributed in the Mediterranean and found in Anatolia as well as Crete. The sporadic or late influx of those northern elements with which the Hellenes were related need not have modified the population of Minoan Crete as a whole. Even on the supposition that there was a ruling caste from the north, of which there is no proof, its influence upon the national type need hardly have been greater than that of the Scandinavian House of Rurik upon the indigenous population of medieval Russia. As far then as present evidence goes, we conclude that the bulk of the Minoan people itself, like the culture which distinguished it, was essentially of Mediterranean origin; it was a southern race related to those primitive populations of the extreme West of Asia which were not of Semitic extraction.

From the darkness which still obscures these problems of culture and race, one salient fact emerges. The civilisation of the Mediterranean, call it Aegean, call it Minoan or Mycenaean, must now take its place beside those which flourished in Egypt and Mesopotamia, not as an offshoot or a mere dependent, but as an associate and an equal. For it grew up upon the foundation of a neolithic culture which derived its features neither from that of Egypt nor from that of Babylon; it is autochthonous in the same sense as the culture of these countries. But when once this claim has been fairly admitted, it must be added that Crete owed a great deal to ancient Egypt, with which land it entertained relations from very ancient times. Communication with the Nile Valley was probably for the most part indirect, by way of Cyprus and the Syrian coast; it may well be that until the eighteenth dynasty there was no actual contact between Cretan and Egyptian, though their merchandise had long been exchanged through the agency of intervening peoples. The concrete evidence for communication between Egypt and Crete goes back to the time of the earliest dynasties. Vases of non-Egyptian type found by Prof. Petrie at Abydos correspond with those found at Knossos belonging to the beginning of the bronze period. Stone vases found in Crete resemble in a striking manner Egyptian early-dynastic types; Dr. Evans has claimed a liparite bowl found at Knossos as Egyptian work of the Fourth Dynasty. At Hagios Onuphrios in Crete were discovered scarabs of the twelfth and thirteenth dynasties, which, whatever chronology we adopt, bring us into the neighbourhood of B.C. 2000. But it is from a period about five hundred years later, corre-

sponding to the Golden Age of Knossos and immediately preceding its fall, that the most interesting evidence is derived. The frescoes in the tomb of Rekhmara, a viceroy of Thothmes III., show us the 'Keftiu' bringing tribute; both from the nature of the objects carried and from the physical type and costume of the carriers there can be no doubt that the persons before us are inhabitants of Minoan Crete. The term Keftiu may have originally included all dwellers in Cyprus, Southern Asia Minor, and the islands generally; but at this time it appears certain that it was more particularly associated with the Cretans as the most conspicuous members of a widely disseminated stock. At about the end of the reign of Thothmes, Knossos fell; and it is unnecessary to enlarge upon the evidence for the continued interaction between the culture of Egypt and that which from this time onward may be properly described as Mycenaean. The Egyptian design of the ceiling in the 'Treasury of Minyas' at Orchomenos is now familiar to all; the facts with regard to Mycenaean vase-types in Egypt from the eighteenth to the twenty-first dynasties have been recorded by Mr. H. R. Hall and other scholars. Specific evidence for the influence of Egypt upon Crete is therefore by no means lacking. But even if none such existed, the affinities between certain characters in the Minoan script and Egyptian hieroglyphs (see p. 473) and the Egyptian conventions adopted by the mural painters of the Minoan palaces would suffice in themselves to establish the connexion between the two empires. Crete rose in the pride of her own strength, but she was never too proud to learn whatever she held useful to her developement.

It seems remarkable that as the chief route from Crete to Egypt lay in part along a region of Western Asia within the radius of Babylonian civilisation, the influence of Chaldaea should be decidedly less conspicuous than that of the Nile Valley. The art of writing on clay tablets may have been suggested from this source, but the Minoan script is not connected with cuneiform, while, as we shall see, it has evident affinities with Egyptian hieroglyphs. Trade seems to have passed between Crete and Egypt undisturbed by Babylonian intervention even at the very point where such intervention would have been easy. It has been conjectured that the advanced sanitation of the Minoans may owe somewhat to the example of Babylonia; remarkable evidence of skill in drainage has been obtained during the excavations at Nippur. Dr. Drerup has further made the interesting suggestion that the later laws of the city of Gortyna may inherit provisions of the lost Minoan Code, which may itself have been derived from such

a code as that of Khammurabi. But with these possibilities Babylonian influence appears to be exhausted.

In the early seventeenth century, George Sandys, the wandering poet, disembarked at Candia and visited the site of Knossos, which to him was a city that once 'held the Regalitie, long since 'having nothing left but the sound of the name.' The tradition of vanished empire which had never deserted the royal home of Minos still persisted after the vicissitudes of three thousand years, but a tradition it remained until the recent excavations converted it into authentic history. Two centuries after the voyage of Sandys, Byron stood by the Scamander and heard Troy doubted; in his day there may have been those who despaired of Knossos also. But as Schliemann confuted the sceptics at Hissarlik, so Evans has dispelled all doubts as to the real importance of the island city. The establishment of autonomous government in 1899 inaugurated a new era which has enabled us to reconstruct with unexpected completeness the life of prince and people in ancient Crete. Isolated earlier efforts were now succeeded by systematic exploration pursued without risk of interference. The archaeologists of England, Italy, and the United States descended upon the island; the palaces and townships, the tombs and sacred caves one by one gave up secrets which had remained hidden alike from the Greek and the Roman, the Byzantine, the Venetian, and the Turk. It was a conquest by forces long mobilised and only waiting their occasion; the operations of the succeeding years may fairly be described as campaigns. Dr. Evans purchased the site of Knossos, not without trouble, from two recalcitrant Beys. The Italian archaeological Mission established itself at Phaestos; Miss Harriet Boyd excavated Gournia; members of the British School at Athens devoted themselves to various eastern sites, the most remarkable of which was the maritime city of Palaikastro. The services which the School has rendered to archaeology both by its independent work in Crete and by its publication of Dr. Evans's Reports would alone suffice to justify its existence, even if no other achievements in the islands and on the mainland stood on record as a proof of its unremitting and profitable activity.

The ruins of the great palaces at Knossos and Phaestos, with their adjacent royal villas, reveal the fact that the Minoans were builders of no mean order. The ashlar masonry, the broad stairways, the walls faced with alabaster and gypsum, afford evidence of an advanced architectural science. The enquirer who for the first time examines a plan of the palace at Knossos

accepts with enthusiasm Dr. Evans's theory that this royal residence was itself the Labyrinth of Hellenic legend, the very work of Daedalus, through the mazes of which the hero Theseus was guided by Ariadne. It may well be that when the place was deserted, but lay as yet unburied, visitors from the North, wandering through corridors and chambers painted with figures of men and formidable bulls, issued with a feeling of awe from the silent place of kings: it may even be that from their narratives the legend of the Minotaur derived its more poetic features. The place, mysterious now, was more ghostly then, when the walls still seemed to echo the footfalls of old inhabitants and no intervention of the covering earth had broken the continuous associations of the past. Many a tale of wonder has been founded upon a less reasonable basis, and no theory of catacombs or deserted quarries suggests a more satisfactory identification.

Labyrinthine though the Cretan palaces are, they were not erected without a plan. Their apparent want of symmetry is due to two principal causes: to rebuilding after damage, and to successive amplifications of existing structures. Palaces have always tended to ramble and add court to court; this was especially the case when the precincts included not only halls of audience, shrines, storehouses, and offices for the transaction of public business, but in addition large women's quarters, and the workshops of the artificers attached to the royal household. Under such conditions a palace covered a great area and formed a little city in itself. We think of the royal residences of the Assyrian and the Persian, of Diocletian's vast enclosure at Spalato, and of the great palace of Constantinople in a later age, which covered an area equal to that of the Louvre, the Carrousel, and the old Tuileries. Of such palaces we can only form an idea in modern times by visiting the home of some Asiatic prince, with its forecourt noisy with petitioners, merchants, craftsmen, and scribes; its shaded and silent inner chambers, rich with carpets and many-coloured hangings; its seraglio and fountained gardens. It is difficult to imagine the appearance of Knossos or Phaestos when they held their full complement, and each part of the building was put to its intended use. The façades may have been irregular, but they must have been imposing not only for their length but even for their height. The upper storeys, and in parts of Knossos there were more than one, appear to have been of timber and plaster; the roofs were probably flat and terraced. Compared with a Minoan palace, the dwelling of a Homeric chieftain is but a mean abode; the house of Ulysses is barbaric in comparison; only the home of Alcinous, as we read of it in the 'Odyssey,' preserves the

tradition of a vanished splendour, of Alcinous who, according to a plausible conjecture, may himself have been a king in Crete. For the rest, the reader may be referred to Dr. Evans's descriptions of Knossos with its throne-room containing the very seat of Minos, its 'hall of the double axe,' its 'Queen's megaron,' and the other courts and apartments to which a picturesque nomenclature lends interest and individuality. The excavations at Phaestos by Halbherr, Pernier, and other members of the Italian Mission are complementary to those at Knossos. The broad stairways of Phaestos remain fixed in the memory even of those who have only seen them in photographic reproduction; impressive in their breadth and in their gradual ascent, they tell their own tale of princely dignity and power.

The domestic architecture of the ordinary home has been chiefly made known to us by the excavations at Gournia and Palaikastro. These towns with their paved streets and contiguous dwellings, in some of which implements and utensils lay yet undisturbed, bring home to us the daily life of a Minoan community of traders, agriculturists, and fishermen. It may be noted as a point of interest that at Gournia the upper storeys of the houses appear to have been constructed of brick, a material little, if at all, used in Knossos. The better dwellings were probably furnished with regular windows, for plaques of pottery with representations of houses, found at Knossos, show framed windows, some of which apparently were closed by oiled skin or curtains coloured red. Interior domestic arrangements were probably above the average of the times. If there is one feature which has impressed the world with the 'modernity' of Minoan ideas, it is the sanitation of the Cretan palaces. In some respects this appears to have been in advance of anything known before our own day; only in Mesopotamia do we find traces of anything similar dating from ancient times, and the Middle Ages had no such care for fundamental laws of health.

Life in the Cretan palaces had its amenities and diversions, in some of which this same note of modernity is very conspicuous. There were probably terraced gardens in which the ladies took the air; there were theatres with raised steps for the spectators, where dances were probably performed: the discovery of the 'theatral area' at Knossos naturally recalled the famed Choros of Ariadne, which Daedalus was said to have devised for the fair daughter of Minos. Above all, there were 'bull-rings,' where bulls were encountered by toreadors of both sexes, whose feats of agility and daring are represented in glyptic and pictorial art with such frequency that the *taurokathapsia* must be regarded as a national institution in Minoan Crete, like the bull-fight in

the Iberian peninsula to-day. The participation of girl-toreadors is a remarkable fact which has been held by some to suggest that in Crete the performers of the arena were not of native origin. It has been brought into connexion with the well-known legend of the Athenian maidens sent, with an equal number of youths, as tribute to Minos, and by him delivered to the Minotaur, the supposition being that the fabulous monster was, as it were, the personification of this dangerous amusement, invented when the amusement itself was long forgotten. Of sport connected with the horse we know nothing; this animal was apparently unknown in Crete till Late-Minoan times. A gem in which a great horse is seen in a ship may represent the first introduction of the species into the island; on a late sarcophagus a chariot is also represented. But boxing was a most popular exercise; in works of art nude athletes are seen engaged in vigorous bouts; on one of them, a steatite vase from Hagia Triada, the French *savate* appears to be anticipated.

Reviewing the remains of the buried towns and palaces as a whole, we infer the existence of a busy unconstrained society, where there was a love of physical agility, where art was honoured, and commerce was regularly encouraged. The royal house was no Rocca defended by moat and bastions; it was a place to which access seems to have been easy, where the petitioner might wait his turn on seats aligned in the shadow of the courtyard wall. Altogether it would appear to have been a cheerful and active community, perhaps inclining to democratic sentiment. It has even been suggested that the destruction of the palaces may have been the work not of a foreign invader but of an insurgent population within; that the princes of Crete, forgetful of Minos and Rhadamanthys, may have grown careless of the commonwealth, and, like the monarchs of later France, incurred a violent retribution. But of this there is no certain proof, and it is perhaps a more probable supposition that Crete was overcome because it failed to maintain its navy at a proper strength.

Minoan civilisation had its letters; the honour of their discovery belongs in a peculiar degree to Dr. Evans, who for many years before excavation began in Crete had been patiently engaged in their investigation. Schliemann had found no traces of a script at Troy; but it seemed incredible that so advanced a civilisation as the Mycenaean should be without a system of recording ideas, while primitive tribes all over the northern hemisphere had their own pictographs, and the cave-pictures and carvings of the later paleolithic age show the rudiments of similar signs at a very remote period of social developement.

If paleolithic man possessed even one or two characters, surely it was incredible that the Minoan should be wholly illiterate. Dr. Evans concentrated his attention upon the problem; and about twenty years ago began the series of discoveries which culminated when the site at Knossos became his own. The first clue had been obtained from a seal-stone given by Mr. Greville Chester to the Ashmolean Museum, and bearing marks of Cretan origin. The clue was immediately followed up; in the early nineties the investigator travelled through the island from end to end accumulating the ancient seals inscribed with the signs which were to prove his theory correct. It is interesting to note that modern superstition aided his search: the Cretan peasant-women treasure such stones, especially those of a milky colour, calling them *γαλοπέτραις* or *γαλούσας*, and wearing them suspended on threads round their necks. Many of these Dr. Evans was able to acquire, and thus the amulets of nursing mothers became, in a sense, philosophers' stones, destined to charm new secrets from the unknown. In 1895 'Cretan Pictographs and Prae-Phoenician Script' was published; in the following year a steatite libation-table was unearthed in the Dictaean cave, bearing a more extensive linear inscription, probably of a dedicatory nature.

The first point had now been abundantly proved: the people of the Aegean *had* a system of writing; certain seals, which had been excavated with objects showing Egyptian influence, proved that by any system of chronology, it must be as old as B.C. 2500. But more comprehensive discoveries were naturally to be expected at Knossos. In April of 1900 there came to light, near the South Propylaeum, a vessel of terra cotta containing a whole hoard of inscribed clay tablets; similar discoveries followed in successive years until the total of Cretan written documents now exceeds two thousand. The greater number came from Knossos itself, but the Italian Archaeological Mission obtained many at Hagia Triada; others again were discovered upon the sites in Eastern Crete. It was no longer a question of isolated characters or brief inscriptions: the Knossos documents were regular archives, carefully stored in chests or boxes lined with sheets of lead. The writing upon them revealed two linear styles and one of hieroglyphs, the bulk of the tablets belonging to the second Late-Minoan period.

The interest aroused was naturally intense: there were some who entertained great expectations: we might, they hoped, study the laws of Minos or read the hymns of the Dictaean Zeus. Such hopes were indeed too sanguine to be fulfilled: the tablets were small bars or labels of clay; in a few cases characters were

traced in ink on pottery, apparently with reed pens. If histories or liturgies were ever written they would have required more convenient surfaces; they would probably have been inscribed upon some perishable material, or on that imperishable bronze which the spoilers of Knossos took care to carry away. It is now clear that the archives which we possess are business documents chiefly relating to stores of provisions and weapons; it may be feared that for literature or national history their importance may prove comparatively slight. Even within the limits which they cover, complete interpretation is still impossible. Dr. Evans has established the existence of a decimal system of numeration, and placed beyond reasonable doubt the meaning of many of the signs; but the day is perhaps still distant when the Cretan writing will give up its secrets.

What then has been gained by this discovery? More than is at first apparent. Comparative study has shown that, although at various times it borrowed much from Egypt, this Cretan script is essentially of indigenous growth. It has further proved a relation to the primitive pictography of Hither Asia, especially that of Lycia and Caria; and it seems probable that the non-Hellenic signs of the early Anatolian alphabets may be due to Minoan influence. The disc with concentric rows of hieroglyphs, found by Dr. Pernier on the acropolis of Phaestos in 1908, appears to support this view, for the signs are not identical with the Minoan, and are probably of Lycian origin. Distinct but kindred systems of writing were thus developing simultaneously in Anatolia and Crete in the middle of the second millennium before Christ. This alone is sufficiently remarkable, but there is more to come. It seems likely that the antecedent stages of the Phoenician alphabet were rendered possible by the Minoan script, and we thus reach a conclusion which to many will appear revolutionary; the Phoenicians may have invented the most convenient alphabet, but did they introduce the first practical system of writing into the Mediterranean? Since the style of art which prevailed in pre-Hellenic Orchomenos is definitely allied to that of Crete, Cadmus may have been a Minoan and not a Phoenician at all.

It is no small thing to have recomposed the history of an invention so important to humanity as the art of writing. Dr. Evans's theories upon Mediterranean scripts are not the least illuminating and suggestive results of his work in Crete. He himself has devoted some space in 'Scripta Minoa' to the question whether or not his discoveries were anticipated some two thousand years ago, and concludes that such may indeed have been the case. The version of the 'Tale of Troy' known to

the Middle Ages was based upon the supposed story of Dictys, a companion of the Cretan princes Idomeneus and Meriones, whose names are familiar to all readers of the 'Iliad'; the story was derived from Septimius, a Latin writer of the fourth century, whose version is now known to be itself based on a Greek original perhaps nearly two centuries older. In this romance Dictys is stated to have written a chronicle of the siege, which he ordered to be placed in a tin chest and buried with him in his tomb at Knossos. It has been already observed that the Knossian archives were really stored in chests lined with lead; and the confusion between two white metals is a slight discrepancy, which need not in itself affect the probability of the story. It may indeed be, as Dr. Evans suggests, that after an earthquake a chest of inscribed tablets was actually uncovered at some time during the Hellenic period; such an event might stir the imagination of a narrative writer, and the legend may thus rest upon a real foundation. Speculations like this have their own fascination; but it is safe to say that by pursuing them Dr. Evans has not succeeded in diminishing the credit which belongs to himself. It may be of interest to conclude these paragraphs upon the Cretan script by mentioning that the fire which partly destroyed the palace at Knossos rendered a real service to posterity by hardening the tablets, which were originally of unbaked clay. The element which has devoured so many other libraries contributed to the preservation of this.

Although earlier discoveries at Mycenae and in the islands had aroused great hopes with regard to Crete, the revelation of Minoan art can scarcely have disappointed the most sanguine expectations. It is an art of a spontaneous force and vigour, strangely effective when compared with the hieratic arts of other ancient civilisations. Conventions it necessarily has, some of them apparently borrowed from Egypt, but they are treated with such a happy audacity that they lose all their stiffness. It is an art which does not proceed by rote, but captures at a stroke the informing character of things, which observes nature, and has the gift of rendering the swiftest of impressions. In a world which used art didactically, it was boldly perceptual; it seizes the meaning of life with such dexterity that the motion seems to survive, and quicken the immutable line; in its powers of instant apprehension it is often nearer to the spirit of Japan than to any of its actual neighbours in time or space. Such an art seems infinitely removed from that of ancient Egypt; yet we may suspect that the difference results less from diversity of racial genius than from the secular influence of environment and institution. Even in Egypt, when for a short space under Akhenaten Egypt herself

was unconventional, there were astonishing revolutions in a system which had seemed insusceptible to change; or can it be, as some had conjectured, that the walls of Tell el-Amarna themselves betray an immigrant influence from the Aegean? However this may be, in the general absence of such conditions among the old continental civilisations, the appearance of another ancient art governed by contrary principles produces an almost disconcerting effect. Minoan art is certainly not above criticism; its modernity is tempered by much that is essentially primitive and faulty. It has neither the austere beauty nor the Parnassian ease of Hellenic art; its proportions are often incorrect; it is without the resource of noble draperies. But in its very conventions it seems spontaneous; it lives in an atmosphere of morning freshness. These majestic or infuriated bulls, these long-legged wasp-waisted men are instinct with vigorous life; the fish are swift, flexible forms; the flowers such as really bend before the wind. Where it frankly imitates an Egyptian model, the work is almost a new creation, and not a servile copy; the relation of the Minoan to his Egyptian model is that of the Italian of the Renaissance to the antique: he retains the motive, but infuses into it a spirit absolutely his own.

Minoan painting is chiefly represented by the frescoes of the palace walls at Knossos, and by the decoration which illustrates the successive styles of ceramic art. The mural paintings must have been influenced by those of Egypt, from which they appear to borrow the custom of representing men with red, and women with white skins. But by experiment and a filial regard for nature, the Cretan artist achieves quite other triumphs; he takes life in its rush and glow no less than its cool solemnities. The toreador fresco of Knossos represents the first, the fresco of the cup-bearer the second of these phases. In the former picture we are transported into the whirl and dust of the arena; the grapplers leap upon the bull; the great beast charges forward, bearing an aggressor like a wisp upon his horns: all is tense and furious life. In the second, a slender boy moves slowly to the left, carrying a long conical vessel in both hands. He is taking part in some procession; his mind is absorbed by the importance of his task. The artist has caught the secret of youth in its exalted mood: the poise of the head is graceful, the whole attitude refined. No strange constriction of the waist or elongation of the body can rob this *ephebus* of his natural charm; he seems an earlier Charmides whom Socrates would have loved to question. There is another though less important fresco which may be compared with this cup-bearer for the freshness of its conception: it is that of a boy gathering crocuses to place

them in a vase, a subject almost Japanese in its intimate charm. For the rest we can but make passing allusion to the great bull's head from Knossos, executed in low stucco-relief, the Gournia bull, the pheasant-hunting cat of Hagia Triada recalling the well-known Mycenaean design, the graceful conventional flowers from the same place, and the marine subjects at Knossos with dolphins, mullets, and sea-growths. If these things are a mere residue, what must have been the wonders of these walls when Knossos and Phaestos were in their prime ?

The sculpture of Crete is upon a small scale, represented by metal and terra-cotta reliefs or figures, by carvings in steatite or ivory, and by a variety of seal-intaglios upon hard and soft stones, covering a long period and manifesting a consistent vigour of style. In all its forms it preserves the essential qualities upon which we have touched above ; it has the undeniable power of conveying the sense of life. The famous 'Harvesters' Vase' is an astonishing creation in its rendering of a group in motion. There is something Dionysiac in the advance of this rustic band inspired by a single enthusiasm ; the long forks slanted upon the shoulders, like dense reeds, admirably suggest a rhythmical collective movement. The 'Chieftain Vase,' on which two soldiers of different rank stand confronted, is no less remarkable for the penetrative individuality of its treatment. Grant that the proportions are incorrect, the psychology of the scene is there ; the two figures are subtly linked in a human relation, the existence of which is instantly apprehended, though its exact significance may remain unknown. Sculpture in the round is rarer than relief, but here, too, there is the same vigour to which deficiencies in execution are readily forgiven. In the ivory statuettes from Knossos, which appear to represent bull-grapplers, the spring and *élan* of leaping figures is wonderfully conveyed ; they are the embodiments of swift but accurate perception. The ceramic art of Crete is a study in itself, to our knowledge of which Dr. Mackenzie has especially contributed. Its decoration is throughout distinguished by a mastery of bold and nervous line, and by the appropriate use of colour. Its greatest triumph is in the rendering of plants and flowers which, whether conventionalised or natural, are perfectly congruous with the ceramic form they decorate. A special word must be spared for the polychrome pottery known as the Kamáres style, from the site where the first fragments were discovered by Professor Myres. It was of ancient introduction, and disappears at an early period, but at its best is admirably decorative in form and colour.

Artistic metal-work is comparatively rare ; the spoilers of the

palaces valued both bronze and gold, and removed all that they discovered. But the fine bronze vessels of the north-west building at Knossos prove the skill of the Cretan worker in the noble metal. Of jewellery enough remains to justify the old traditions of fine craftsmanship. The golden necklace with which the second Minos bribed Scylla of Megara to betray her father was still remembered in the days of Aeschylus; the tombs of Hagia Triada have yielded work, perhaps, sufficient for a like temptation. It has been suggested that the famous gold cups of Vapheio may themselves have been made in Crete; certainly the powerful treatment of the bulls is nothing if not Minoan. The wonderful inlaid weapons of Mycenae have in like manner been claimed for Crete, and again without improbability. The royal 'draught-'board' of Knossos, rich with inlays of gold and silver, of ivory, rock-crystal, and blue *kuanos*, bears sufficient testimony to the achievements of the Cretans in a style of decoration oriental in its splendour of contrasted colour. Probably the textile art was highly developed in Crete, and costumes were evidently sumptuous. Though usually confining themselves to a mere loin-cloth, upon ceremonial occasions men wore long robes which were perhaps dyed and embroidered. The costume of the women shows strange analogies to the fashions of our own nineteenth century, with its close bodices and skirts of ample flounces. It may have compensated in beauty of colour for its inferiority in grace: in the latter respect it does not compare favourably with the chiton and himation of Greece, or the flowing garments of the Trojan women.

The independent character of Aegean civilisation appears to be confirmed by the evidence as to religious belief and practice derived from the sacred places of Crete. A fundamental distinction between the island and Egypt has already been noticed—there is an absence of important temple remains. The Egyptian temple in quite early times was a vast establishment, served by a hierarchy of priests, and possessed of great revenues. The palaces of Crete are extensive; as yet there are no signs that the houses of the gods were commensurate with those of the kings. Small shrines contained little figures or cult-objects, of marble or terra cotta; but there is no space for stately ceremonial or the assemblage of many worshippers. The personality of the Cretan divinities is elusive, and it is hard for those unversed in the subtleties of comparative religion to disengage the essence from the accident. Ultimately they appear to resolve themselves into two: a great Nature-goddess, and a youthful male god regarded either as a consort or as a son. The goddess was certainly the more considerable; under her

fiercer aspect as the wild huntress Dictynna, to whom bulls and perhaps human beings were sacrificed, she was too formidable to endure a rival. Connected with her worship was a group of demons with the forms of men and heads of animals, frequently seen upon gems, and perhaps representing spirits of the woods and springs.

It is a pre-Aryan pantheon, latterly modified by the syncretism consequent on increasing northern influences. If there ever was a Cretan Zeus, god of the double-axe, identical with the Lycian Zeus of Labranda, he was only in later times transformed into the Zeus of Hellenic mythology; a pedigree was made out for him; he was born of the mother-goddess upon Ida; at Knossos he weds the Grecian Hera. It has been observed that the legend of this *Hieros Gamos* may be accepted as an allegory illustrating the interfusion of two cultures by the fancied union of their deities. Side by side with the cult of anthropomorphic gods continued the ancient veneration of tree and the baetyl; the aniconic forms retain their place until the close of Minoan civilisation. The sacred pillars in the sanctuary by the north staircase in the palace at Knossos are about the height of a man, and rest upon square bases; pillars and trees are represented upon the intaglio gems with figures doing their accustomed reverence. Dr. Evans, in an exhaustive study of this subject, has traced the affinities of this Minoan worship very far afield, showing its wide distribution throughout the countries of the Mediterranean area. Of the horns of consecration, and the double-axe or *labrys*, nothing but a mere mention can be made; the latter is the most characteristic of the Cretan religious symbols, but need not always have a religious meaning; it may often have the significance of a badge to indicate membership of a high family. Attention may, however, be drawn to the shrine discovered at Knossos in 1903 containing terra-cotta statuettes of a priestess, a snake-goddess, votive garments, and a marble cross with equal arms. The cross appears to have been the principal object of veneration, and Dr. Evans suggests that it may be intended as a symbol of the sun. Votive offerings were as numerous in Crete as in most parts of Europe to-day. The statuettes discovered by Professor Myres at Petsofà and those of Palaikastro recall the figures offered at many a modern shrine. But no more interesting objects of this kind have been found than those brought to light by Mr. Hogarth from the recesses of the lower Dictaean cave. The offerings were of bronze, taking the form of double-axes, animals, personal ornaments, and a statuette of Amen-ra, assigned to the twenty-second Egyptian dynasty. A pleasing feature of Aegean worship is seen in the offering of lilies or irises, as upon a signet from Mycenae,

recalling the presentations of flowers which attract so much in the ritual of Buddhism.

Among the many points of interest raised by the study of Minoan religious belief we select one as most significant: the importance of the female both as worshipped and worshipper. The pre-eminence of the Cretan goddess over the god has already been mentioned; the representations of cult-scenes occurring in Minoan and Mycenaean art show that women played a prominent part in ceremony and sacrifices. The fact perhaps suggests a freedom from rigid hieratic rule and a more immediate recognition of the maternal force in Nature; it also confirms the primitive connexion between Crete and ancient Anatolia, where the mother-goddess was universally venerated. The Cretans believed in a future world; utensils and ornaments were deposited with the remains of the deceased, and the dead were buried with more or less pomp according to their worldly circumstances. Among the forms of sepulchre are the great bee-hive *tholos*, the sarcophagus, the terra cotta *larnax* or cist, and common receptacles for the bones of many, such as came to light at Palaikastro.

The discoveries in Crete have restored to the light of day a great civilisation which foreran that of Hellas; they have proved it to be more ancient and more original than had been supposed. They have revealed to us a most fascinating art, not indeed independent of convention, but never suffering convention to blind it to the beauty of living things. They have modified old opinions as to the forces which directed the civilisation of the Mediterranean; they have led us past the Phoenicians, and in a measure away from Egypt and Babylon; they have rehabilitated ancient legends, proving the unwisdom of despising immemorial traditions. Finally, by linking Greece through an unbroken chain of evidence first to Mycenaean and Minoan civilisation, and then to the more primitive culture which underlies both, they have strengthened that alliance between scholarship and anthropology upon which progress in the future so largely depends. As the protagonist in a work to which the term memorable may be applied without exaggeration, Dr. Arthur Evans has deserved well of British archaeology; the members of other nations who have won distinction in the same field have been among the first to join their applause to that of his own compatriots. It has been granted to him to recover the throne of Minos and unearth the Daedalian labyrinth:

> dolos tecti ambagesque resolvit
> Caeca regens filo vestigia.

These are achievements with which any man might be proud to have associated his name.

Art. IX.—THE LAST YEARS OF THE PROTECTORATE.

1. *The Last Years of the Protectorate*, 1656–1658. By Charles Harding Firth, M.A., Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Oxford. 2 vols. 8vo. 1909. Longmans.
2. *The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell, with Elucidations.* By Thomas Carlyle. Edited with Notes, Supplement and enlarged Index by S. C. Lomas. With an Introduction by C. H. Firth. 3 vols. 8vo. 1904. Methuen.

We have received these volumes with very mixed feelings; on the one side they renew our grief for the loss of the dear friend from whose hand we had once hoped they might reach us, but who was not permitted to finish the task to which he had devoted his life; on the other, they bring us one long proof of the excellence of his judgement in designating Professor Firth to continue his work, which has been done with a modesty and a merit far beyond any praise of ours. Dr. Firth has, of course, long been known as a specialist in this period of our history, and the numerous works relating to it which he has written or edited are so many silent witnesses explaining not only Gardiner's choice, but also the practically universal approval with which its announcement was met. We do not hesitate to say that the accomplished work excels even our anticipations, and places its author in the first rank of living historians.

With these volumes of Dr. Firth's we must associate the 'Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell,' collected and edited by Carlyle nearly seventy years ago, which Mrs. Lomas has now re-edited, with such corrections and additions as were rendered necessary by the trained research, the improved opportunities and the stricter literary morality of the present age. Seventy years ago editors were too apt to suppose that the great men of the past always wrote or spoke as in full dress, and assumed to themselves the right to 'sand-paper' the language into what they considered to be the heroic style. But even if we could admit the principle, Carlyle's ideas on the subject of style may very well not be ours; and in any case, Oliver preferred to be painted with the wart on his face, and would presumably have preferred to be edited with all the rugosities of his diction. This is what Mrs. Lomas has done, and in doing it has increased our debt to Carlyle, who—we should never forget—first in modern times convinced the public that Oliver was neither rogue, nor fanatic, nor hypocrite, but, in sober truth, an honest English-

man, working, according to his lights, for the good of England. It is thus that the book has an exceptional value for those who are called on to rule; or, as Carlyle wrote with a presentation copy to Sir Robert Peel,

> 'The authentic words and actings of the noblest governor England ever had may well have interest for all governors of England; may well be, as all Scripture is, as all genuine words and actings are, profitable—profitable for reproof, for correction, and for edifying and strengthening withal.'

What Carlyle thought that the words of Oliver might do for Peel he might have thought them capable of doing for Peel's successors; and we will permit ourselves to thank Mrs. Lomas for her spirited attempt to persuade them to read and master Oliver's teachings by this presentment of them in a form at once correct and comely.

Oliver's 'Letters' are complete in themselves; but Dr. Firth's volumes have to be considered in connexion with Gardiner's latest, of which they are avowedly the continuation. They thus begin abruptly with the meeting of Oliver's second Parliament (September 17, 1656) and the negotiations between the exiled Charles Stuart, known to the Royalists as King Charles II, and the King of Spain. This involves the story of the Spanish War, which has an interest in our national and imperial developement often overlooked, or put aside, in the consideration of the constitutional questions, many of which were of mere transitory importance, though others, after being apparently extinguished at the time, have blazed up again in recent years and are still burning. Even then, vast as the issues depending on the war were known to be, they seem to have been held by many as quite secondary to the domestic politics of the day; and it is not unusual now to be asked what it was all about, or why should there have been a war with Spain? Others, again, who would fain seem wise after the event, point out that because, guided by the active ambition of Louis XIV, France became a European danger, Oliver ought to have foreseen that France, not Spain, was the real enemy of England. But what France was in the end of the century, Spain still threatened to be in the middle of it, and it was in the middle that Oliver lived and ruled.

There were, no doubt, sufficient causes of quarrel with both kingdoms; and if none other, then the 'insult and contumely' * which they had each offered to the new Republic, and Oliver's determination that England should not be the outcast of

* Corbett, 'England in the Mediterranean,' i. 272.

Western Europe. With this determination, with a fleet ready to hand, and with France at war with Spain, the question resolved itself into Which side would England take? and the balance of advantage and predilection told in favour of France. The question was in effect settled, without any declaration, by the expedition of Penn and Venables in 1655. That this was ordered to take, or to attempt to take, Hispaniola or Cuba, and did, in fact, take Jamaica, is familiarly known; as also that the two generals—'bloody-minded men,' as the old doggerel calls them—on their return were both committed to the Tower for having acted contrary to their instructions. Whether Oliver expected the war, so begun, to be confined to the West Indies may be doubted; it is more probable that he expected something like the actual event—a considerable delay before the Spaniards could make up their minds, and then, such war in both American and European seas as their navy was capable of. But the Spanish naval power was at so low an ebb that their part of the war by sea was limited to defence, and in that was mainly distinguished by its bad success. On shore, the same need which forced Oliver and Mazarin into alliance threw Charles Stuart into the arms of Philip IV, and gave rise to various projects for an invasion of England by Spanish troops in the Stuart cause—a form of union which Royalists spoke of as necessary. One, Sir Marmaduke Langdale, had written to his king the year before, that

'no party in England would be willing to stir without aid from abroad. Those are not your friends, or do not understand England, that will persuade your Majesty that strangers will not be welcome to your friends in England.'

We may think that Langdale was basing his opinion on the sentiments of a small minority of his countrymen; for all history, since the days of Edward II, is evidence that Englishmen, as such, have ever had the strongest objection to foreigners interfering in their domestic affairs. More to the purpose, it seems to us, is an opinion quoted by Dr. Firth:

'The nature of the English is, that if any strange army should set footing in any part of the dominions of the English, they will be as one man, and will rather lose life and goods than that any strange army should remain in any part of their dominions.'

Nor can we forget that the attempts of the Queen to obtain the support of Dutch or French troops for her husband during the Civil War had enormously increased the prejudice against him. And it was not mere foreigners that it was now proposed to bring into the country. Of all foreigners, the most hated were

Spaniards, whom a century of war and fearsome tales of the Inquisition had rendered objects of horror; of all foreigners, the most loathed were the Irish, against whom the massacres of 1641 were still fresh in memory and belief; and it was just men of these two nationalities that composed the army which it was now hoped to send to the support of the royal cause in England.

'The majority of Charles II's soldiers were Irish, and the bulk of the Spanish contingent was to consist of Irish regiments in the service of Spain. "I am confident," wrote Lockhart to Thurloe, "all Englishmen (that can but pretend to the lowest principles of common honesty) will abhor conjunction with so barbarous a crew." In spite of his reservation, adds Dr. Firth, Lockhart was wrong. Amongst the Royalists and the Levellers a considerable number of persons were ready to facilitate the landing of the invaders and to co-operate with them when landed.'

The number, though considerable, was probably relatively small; but at any rate the invasion was not made, nor even attempted. The Secretary of State was also the Postmaster-General, and, in his double capacity, organised a system of espionage and intelligence, both in England and on the Continent, which gave the Government timely warning of all plots, of all contemplated risings, of all levies of the royal army in Flanders. Nor, though Dr. Firth does not specially notice it, can we doubt that the squadron of 'eleven frigates' which, on July 28, 1656, took up its station on the Flemish coast had a large part in rendering the hostile schemes of no avail. The direct and avowed purposes of this squadron were the clearing the seas of the privateers * which were scourging our trade. But it is self-evident that those privateers and other ships convoyed by them were intended to bring over the invading army; and that, without any display, the English squadron, by blockading the Flemish coast, was making the invasion impossible. It was not the policy of the Government at the time to accentuate the importance of this service; and if the blockading squadron was under the command of Sir Jeremy Smyth, there is a very clear reason why little was said of it after the Restoration; so that between the two it has been neglected and forgotten.

But none the less it ruined the hopes of the Royalists in that direction for that year, and left them to turn once more to the

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* Following the examples of Gardiner and Dr. Firth, we use the word 'privateer,' but the ships to which it is applied were then known as 'private men of war'; the word 'privateer' seems to have been first invented about fifteen years later.

project of assassination, for which, during that and the following year, there were many schemes, all devised by Colonel Sexby, who, by the strange irony of events, though acting with the Royalists, was of diametrically opposite opinions, a Leveller, or—so far as modern names can be applied to conditions of two hundred and fifty years ago—an Anarchist. Extremes met. To both Royalist and Leveller, Oliver's personality was most objectionable, though for very different reasons ; to the one, he had usurped the place of the King ; to the other, that of the sovereign people. It has been often put forward as an axiom that political assassination is contrary to the genius of Englishmen, and that only exceptional men will be found to entertain the idea. It will come, therefore, as a blow to many to learn that not only could Englishmen in considerable numbers engage in plots to assassinate Oliver, but that amongst them were men whose reputation stood, and still stands, high for truth, loyalty, and honour.

'The most respectable Royalists' (says Dr. Firth) 'raised no objection when schemes for that purpose were proposed. "No man," declared Nicholas, "that should effect so glorious a work can possibly fail of an ample and very honourable reward for it as well on earth as in heaven." Ormonde had been cognisant of Talbot's plan to assassinate Cromwell in November 1655, and Hyde was kept constantly informed of the progress of Sexby's design. "Never," he was told, "was anything more unhappily prevented than the killing Cromwell the first day of the Parliament."'

When we find men like Hyde (the future Earl of Clarendon), Nicholas, and Ormonde approving such attempts, the schemes of a half-crazy fanatic like Sexby are almost venial. But they were certainly dangerous. He enlisted agents among discharged soldiers, men like himself inured to danger and half mad with fanaticism. Amongst them one Miles Sindercombe, who had been dismissed from the army 'as a busy person, forward to 'promote ill designs,' but, from his humble position, unsuspected of the prominent part he had really taken in various mutinous outbreaks. With Sindercombe were joined two others—Cecil and Boyes, whose real name was perhaps Wood ; and

'the three conspirators decided to kill the Protector on September 17, at the opening of Parliament. They hired a room in the house of a tailor in King Street, Westminster, intending to shoot him from the window as he went by in his coach. But each of the three, though bent on taking Cromwell's life, was anxious not to risk his own ; and it appearing that there was not any possible way of escaping out of the house, they were discouraged from that enterprise. They therefore searched the neighbourhood till they found a house possessing several back doors.'

In this they lurked, intending to shoot the Protector as he went down after the sermon in the Abbey. But, as so often happens, their first care was to ensure their own safety, and as that appeared doubtful, they allowed the opportunity and the Protector to pass by. They then resolved to take advantage of Oliver's going to Hampton Court, and having hired a house at Hammersmith by the roadside, in a narrow, dirty place, where a coach would be obliged to go slowly, lay in wait to shoot him with 'screwed guns,' described as 'strange engines,' each carrying twelve bullets and a slug. Incidentally, it may be pointed out that weird contrivances of this kind—as the many-barrelled machine with which Fieschi tried to murder Louis Philippe, or the bomb with which Orsini aimed at the life of Louis Napoleon—may very well spread havoc and destruction, as these did, but seldom succeed in their proposed object; that, as in the case of William the Silent, Henry IV, or, in modern times, Lincoln, Garfield, or Carnot, is generally done by a simple weapon in the hands of a man whose first care is to do it.

But at any rate there was no opportunity of trying the efficacy of the twelve-bulleted 'screw gun.' Oliver was kept in London by the sitting of Parliament; so the conspirators determined to catch him as he was taking the air in Hyde Park. The experience, though tragically intended, reads very like a comedy—always because the would-be assassins were primarily intent on their own safety. They bought horses, the fleetest they could find; their zeal in this cause was evidenced by the prices paid—80*l.*, for instance, for one, 75*l.* for another.

'For many days they lurked about, waiting and watching for an opportunity, armed with swords and pistols only, and trained their horses as if to run a race. Cecil boasted that he could have ridden his black horse a hundred miles without drawing bit, and at such a speed that in ten miles he would have distanced most horses in England.'

To give the poor beast a better chance he wore the thinnest of clothes. And so one day in Hyde Park the opportunity came. 'Cromwell alighted from his coach, and seeing Cecil, 'admired his horse, and asked him, "whose horse that was he '"rode on."'' Everything was ready, an exit provided; but the black horse had a cold that day, the operation was more risky, and it was postponed. After which they proposed to set fire to Whitehall and burn it and the Protector together; but before it was accomplished one of the gang got frightened and revealed the plot. Cecil was arrested, and on a slight compulsion told all he knew, confessed the fact that Sexby was the originator

of the plot, and revealed its ulterior object. 'When the Pro-'tector was despatched,' he said, 'forces were to come over 'from Flanders in ships to be hired of the Dutch with the King 'of Spain's money.' Sindercombe, on the other hand, fought like a wild cat, could not be taken till he was wounded, and then would say nothing. His two accomplices were permitted to be the necessary two witnesses against him, and being duly convicted of high treason, he was sentenced to death with the usual formalities. He prevented this by dying in his bed from some poison which he had secretly obtained. But meantime the House realised the danger from which they had escaped;

'they realized that the Protector had been dogged by assassins for the last four months . . . they realized too that his assassination meant the overthrow of the Government and perhaps ruin for themselves. "I believe," said one, "none of us that sit here had been safe if this design had prospered." With one accord, therefore, they ordered a general public thanksgiving, and resolved to wait on the Protector in a body to congratulate him on his escape.'

And there sprang up again the question of the kingship. It was moved that to the vote of congratulation should be added something more, to the effect 'that His Highness would be pleased 'to take upon him the government according to the ancient Con-'stitution, so that the hopes of our enemies in plots would be at 'an end'; and the sense of this seemed to be approved, though the consideration of it was postponed, pending the debate on the Militia Bill, which was really an Act for a special tax on Royalists for the maintenance of a permanent army. It was not till this was rejected by a large anti-military majority, which objected to a standing army and the government by Major-Generals—men, they alleged, of mean extraction and humble position, who were now aiming at lucrative posts of high authority—that they recurred to the great constitutional problem of the day. The debates on the Militia Bill had added weight to the argument in favour of constitutional government and the renewal of the kingship.

This was not, as was said at the time by many of its opponents, and has been often said since, a proposal which merely came from the friends of Oliver, acting on his own suggestion, although the attitude of the army showed him later on that his acceptance of it was unadvisable; it was the desire—as appeared—of a very large majority of the Parliament; for,

'as a shrewd observer remarked, "they are so highly incensed against the arbitrary actings of the Major-Generals that they are greedy of any powers that will be ruled and limited by law." . . .

To people outside the army the great objection to the retention of the elective Protectorate was that, if it were retained, John Lambert would be the next Protector.'

A party was thus formed, including many who had been active in the overthrow of Charles I, but were now intent on a law of hereditary succession, which, after full consideration of the question, resolved to go beyond this and 'to submit to Parliament a revised Constitution conferring upon the Protector the 'office and title of king.' When the proposal was read out in Parliament a stormy debate followed. Lambert, with much violence, led the opposition. 'The re-establishment of kingship, he said, 'was contrary to the oaths and protestations they had all 'taken, and to the principles for which the army had fought and 'so much blood had been shed.' He endeavoured to stir up the angry feelings of the army; and others followed, though in more moderate language, notably Desborough,* who had married the Protector's sister, and Fleetwood, who had married his daughter, but now urged that 'it was no time to divide men 'about the nature of the Constitution at the moment when 'Charles Stuart was preparing to land in England.'

They did more than oppose the motion in Parliament. They stirred up an agitation in the army, till a body of the officers, a hundred strong, including the Major-Generals, waited on Oliver. They expressed their dissatisfaction with the movement and their hope that he would refuse the title of king. About that Oliver, it would seem, had not made up his mind; but he had decided that he would put a stop to the dictation of the army officers. He therefore addressed them at some length. He rehearsed, in a cursory way, the constitutional history of the last few years. They had, he said, made him their drudge long enough. Against his own judgement he had, at their bidding, dissolved the Long Parliament, and had called together the Little Parliament—140 honest men whom they had named. These met, 'and what did 'they? Fly at liberty and property, insomuch as if one 'man had twelve cows, they held another that wanted cows 'ought to take a share with his neighbour. Who could have 'said anything was their own if they had gone on?' They were not suffered to do this and were dissolved. Then came the present Parliament, called at their desire.

'"I gave my vote against it," he said, "but you were confident, by your own strength and interest, to get men chosen to your hearts'

* We follow Dr. Firth's spelling of this name; but the man himself wrote it Disbrowe.

desire. How you have failed therein, and how much the country has been disobliged, is well known. That it is time to come to a settlement and lay aside arbitrary proceedings, unacceptable to the nation. And by the proceedings of this Parliament you see they stand in need of a check or balancing power" (meaning, as the sense and Mrs. Lomas explain it, the House of Lords, or a House so constituted). "By their judicial power, they fall upon life and member, and doth the Instrument in being enable me to control it?"' (*Lomas*, iii. 488.)

'The officers,' he continued, 'might dislike a House of Lords, 'but it was necessary to have some assembly of the kind as a 'check or balancing power'; and as the strongest proof of this need he instanced the recent case of James Nayler, a crazy Quaker, whom the House, in the frenzy of religious excitement, had adjudged guilty of blasphemy, and, claiming that the jurisdiction which the bishops had formerly exercised was now theirs, had sentenced the poor wretch to the most savage and abominable tortures, which Oliver had in vain attempted to remit or mitigate. The officers were dismayed at finding the tables thus turned on them.

'To hear the constitutional history of the last few years treated with such unconventional freedom and to be told so many home truths was a salutary shock to their political self-sufficiency.'

It had the best possible effect. The violence of their opposition was lessened, and three of the Major-Generals were, it was said, converted, and were prepared to accept the revival of a House of Lords and the settlement of the succession. But the question before the House now extended to the whole scheme of religion, government, and the succession, and took the form afterwards known as 'The Humble Petition and Advice.' After being debated for many days, on March 5 the Parliament decided 'unanimously and without a division' that future Parliaments should consist of two Houses. This caused a general surprise.

'Thurloe's commentary helps to explain why this creation of a second House was accepted by the Opposition. The soldiers who led the minority in the House were not entirely blind. They had felt the ill-results of giving unlimited power to a House of Commons alone during the period from 1649 to 1653, when a Parliament of one House governed England with sovereign power. For that reason they had devised the constitutional scheme embodied in the Instrument of Government, with all the restrictions on the authority of future Parliaments which it contained. They were beginning to see now that it was impossible to maintain these paper restrictions, without a direct appeal to force, unless there was some power in

the Constitution able to enforce them. The Protector's veto was not enough, and they began to appreciate the validity of the Protector's argument, that a second House of Parliament was required to balance the House elected by the people. Moreover, they knew very well that the supporters of the Protectorate were a minority in the country, and that if the people could freely express its will in Parliament it would recall the exiled King. On reflection, therefore, they were not sorry to see a sort of senate established as a check to the popularly elected Lower House.'

Arguments that appealed to the experience of these hard-headed, hard-handed soldiers of the Commonwealth may well be considered even at the present time, when similar questions are being discussed. On March 25, after a two days' debate, it was resolved by 123 to 62 'to ask the Protector to assume the title 'and office of king.' It was still opposed by many of the army officers. Lambert and Fleetwood spoke strongly against it, though without effect. They continued irreconcileable. Sydenham, Desborough, and Hewson also are named; and, from a somewhat different point of view, Prynne published his 'King 'Richard III Revived,' which reprinted 'the petition (contrived 'by himself) to importune him to accept the kingship and crown 'of England'—as if he were unwilling to do so, though he had prepared the way 'by the bloody murder of King Henry VI and 'Edward V,' and a quotation from Ecclesiastes. 'That which hath 'been is now, and that which is to be hath already been; and God 'requireth that which is driven away.' Prynne had once been taken seriously, but now his ravings passed unheeded; and when Oliver refused the title, the House reconsidered and recast its arguments, hoping that he might still be induced to accept.

These arguments show how strong even in these men was the conservative principle. They refer almost entirely to the history of the past; that, to them, was the safe guide to constitutional liberty. It is impossible to reproduce the arguments at length, but in brief outline they are: King designated an office not a title, the whole body of English law was fitted to it, the people knew what a king could or could not lawfully do; there was no limit or restraint to the action of a Protector but his own will or his own strength. One argument appealed strongly to everyone who had anything to lose:

'If Cromwell bore the title of king all those that obeyed and served him would be secured by a law made long before any of the political differences of to-day had a being. By the Act of Henry VII a full provision was made for the safety of those who served a *de facto* king; and if the Protector became king, this law, hitherto pleaded on behalf of the Royalists, would henceforth be on the side of those

who had fought for the Parliament and now supported Cromwell's Government.'

It was, as will be remembered, on a later and inverted use of this argument that—after the Restoration—Sir Harry Vane was put to death. Oliver took two days to think over the request, to seek counsel of God, and on Monday, April 13, he refused, in a long speech addressed to the Committee of the Parliament. He admitted that their grounds were strong and rational; but though kingship be not a title but a name of office that runs through the law, yet it is not from the reason of the name, but from what is signified. It is a name of office, plainly implying the supreme authority, and it is within the competence of Parliament to give to any other name the same authority and the same limitations. The change, then, is to be considered not as a matter of necessity, but of convenience.

'I am a man standing in the place I am in; which place I undertook not so much out of the hope of doing any good, as out of a desire to prevent mischief and evil, which I did see was imminent in the nation. I saw we were running headlong into confusion and disorder, and would necessarily run into blood; and I was passive to those that desired me to undertake the place that now I have. . . . I profess I had not that apprehension, when I undertook the place, that I could do much good; but I did think I might prevent imminent evil. And therefore I am not contending for one name compared with another, and therefore have nothing to answer to any arguments that were used in giving preference to Kingship or Protectorship. For I should almost think that any name were better than my name; and I should altogether think any person fitter than I am for any such business.' (*Lomas*, iii. 62, 63.)

If, then, it is a matter of indifference, or may easily be made so, it would be the part of a knave to assume the title which would give offence to many.

'"I tell you" (he said) "there are such men in this nation; that are godly men of the same spirit, men that will not be beaten down with a worldly or carnal spirit while they keep their integrity. And I deal plainly and faithfully with you, when I say, that I cannot think that God would bless me in the undertaking of anything, Kingship or whatever else, that would justly and with cause grieve them. . . . If that I know, as indeed I do, that very generally good men do not swallow this title . . . it is my duty and my conscience to beg of you that there may be no hard things put upon me, things, I mean, hard to them, that they cannot swallow. . . . I think truly it will be no sin, that you have a tenderness, even possibly (if it be their weakness) to the weakness of those that have integrity and honesty and uprightness . . . who think that their virtue lies in

despising authority. . . . I think you will be the better able to root out of this nation that disobedient spirit and principle . . . by complying, indulging, and being patient to the weakness and infirmities of men that have been faithful, and have bled all along in this cause ; and who are faithful and will oppose all oppositions (I am confident of it) to the things that are the fundamentals in your Government, in your settlement for civil and Gospel liberties."' (*Lomas*, iii. 67, 68.)

Such an abstract gives the sense, though but a poor idea of the words, in which at great length Oliver refused the crown. The reason alleged is a good one, is perhaps sufficient, though it is clear from what was said afterwards that most, if not all, of the opposition from army officers would have yielded to the expressed wish of Oliver. It may therefore be asked whether there was any other and a determining reason. A possible answer may perhaps be found by noting the opinions current amongst the Royalists. Some of them thought it did not matter much what decision Oliver and the Parliament came to ; others, that Oliver's acceptance of the crown would rouse such indignation in the army that his downfall would be certain.

' "The more sober persons" (it is Clarendon that says it) "of the King's party trembled at the proposal, and believed that it was the only way utterly to destroy the King and to pull up all future hopes of the Royal Family by the roots. When they considered the condition of England, and, above all, the temper of their own party, they perceived many things which favoured the foundation of a new dynasty. They saw all men even already tired in their hopes ; and that which was left of spirit in them was from the horror they had of the confusion of the present Government ; that very many who had sustained the King's quarrel in the beginning were dead ; that the present King, by his long absence out of the kingdom, was known to very few ; so that there was too much reason to fear that much of that affection that appeared under the notion of allegiance to the King was more directed to the monarchy than the person ; and that if Cromwell were once made king, and so the Government ran again in the old channel, though those who were in love with a republic would possibly fall from him, he would receive abundant reparation of strength by the access of those who preferred the monarchy ; which probably would reconcile most men of estate to an absolute acquiescence, if not to an entire submission. For these reasons the wiser Royalists obstructed the design as much as they could, and exulted when the Protector refused the crown. They who at that time exercised their thoughts with most sagacity looked upon that refusal of his as an immediate act of Almighty God towards the King's restoration ; and many of the soberest men of the nation confessed, after the King's return, that their dejected spirits were wonderfully raised and their hopes revived

by that infatuation of his." This, however' (adds Dr. Firth), 'was not generally accepted till after the King's return.'

Is it permissible to say that perhaps Oliver was of some such opinion at the time? If we may suppose that he believed—as Royalists did later—that his acceptance of the crown would 'pull up all future hopes of the Royal Family by the roots,' who can say that he was unwilling that his should be the hand to cause this lasting breach in the continuity of the reigning dynasty? that he had not pictured to himself a restoration—not, indeed, of Charles II, for whom he can scarcely have felt anything but contempt and loathing, but—of some other member of the family: a brother, for instance, maybe the Duke of York, of whom no evil was yet known; or Henry, afterwards Duke of Gloucester, described, though not perhaps without bias, as 'a prince of 'extraordinary hopes, both from the comeliness and gracefulness 'of his person, and the vivacity and vigour of his wit and 'understanding'?—or even that, peering into the future, he had not seen that security of religion and liberty might come from Holland? Such a restoration, brought about under proper safeguards, he may have seen would be the true settlement of the constitutional problem; a truer settlement than that brought about by the hasty and unreasoning dissatisfaction of the people. It is not, of course, to be supposed that Oliver had, for one moment, any thought of bringing about such a restoration; or that he even thought it possible in the immediate future; but he may quite well have been unwilling to put it out of the power of those after him, if it should seem the best solution of the problem.

But Protector or King was equally contrary to the idea of a theocratic republic which was held by the Fifth Monarchy Men, and they decided that the speediest way of attaining their ideal was by removing Oliver. The expectation of a breach between him and the army was as a summons to action. Their preachers had from the first

'denounced him as an apostate and usurper, who had taken the crown from the head of Christ to place it on his own, and whose Government was a part of that Fourth Monarchy which it was their duty to destroy.'

And though as years passed by their numbers sank, and their influence, such as it was, grew less and less, the teaching of those who remained faithful was more venomous than ever. There was some attempt to form a coalition between these men and the advanced republicans, among the Baptists and Independents; but the theories they broached were too extreme, and they were

told 'that people who tried to interpret such obscure books as 'the prophecy of Daniel and the Revelation were fools.' This plain speaking was thrown away on the wild fanatics who swayed the more ignorant men of their party, and, apparently in March 1657, they published a manifesto bearing the title 'A Standard Set Up.' It began with an historical summary of events since the close of the war and a denunciation of the Protector's Government, an assumption of power, it said, which was at once usurpation and apostasy. Oliver was therefore 'guilty of high treason on the account of God and man in the 'erecting this Government.' His actions 'exceed the rage, 'oppression and treason of the late King, for which he was 'brought to justice.' He hath sinned against 'the Lord Jesus 'Christ and His people.' This was followed by an assertion that

'all earthly Governments and worldly Constitutions must be "broken and removed" to make way for the "kingdom of Christ." . . . "The supreme absolute legislative power and authority to make laws for the governing of the nations, and the good and well-being of mankind, is originally and essentially in the Lord Jesus Christ, by right, conquest, gift, election and inheritance." The Scriptures, being "the revealed will and rule of the legislator," were to be the only law. . . . There were to be no tithes, no excise, no taxes at all in the time of peace, and no fixed salaries for the ministers of religion.'

And to bring about this happy and truly godly state 'all saints 'that hunger after the truth' were to take arms and enlist under the banner of the Lord Jesus—which assumed a visible and tangible form as a standard of white taffeta, bearing a red lion, with the words, 'Who shall rouse him up?' Then they bought arms and ammunition, and fixed the day for their rising. Of course the scheme broke down. In the opinion of many the time was wrongly counted; the reign of the Beast was to be forty-two months, and, to the appointed day in April, Oliver had only been recognised as Protector for forty. Many held aloof on this question of arithmetic; others preferred talking to acting, and were lukewarm. Still the movement threatened to be dangerous. But the Government had full information, and on the given day, April 9,

'News of a suspicious gathering at Shoreditch reached Whitehall about seven, and a party of horse was promptly sent to surround the house. They found there some twenty men, armed, booted and spurred, bundles of declarations ready for distribution, some money and some arms, and the standard bearing the red lion of the Tribe of Judah.'

Quantities of arms and ammunition were seized; and though no public trial of the conspirators took place, their leaders—among them one Venner, a native, or at least long a denizen of Massachusetts—were kept as prisoners in the Tower till the end of the Protectorate. Several known republicans—Lawson, Harrison, and others—were arrested on suspicion, but were released after a few days. The only real effect was that, as formerly Sindercombe's plot, so now this increased the feeling that the Protector's acceptance of the crown would give security to the public peace. It is true that

'The attempted rising seemed more dangerous to contemporaries than it appears to later historians. . . . But though a few desperate fanatics could effect little against a Government with so many soldiers at its disposal as the Protector's, they could create an opportunity which more powerful opponents might utilise. In January 1661 the same Venner and fifty or sixty followers once more took up arms for "King Jesus"; they beat the trained bands, threw all London into alarm and disorder, and were not suppressed for three whole days.'

After which, the gallows prevented Venner giving any further trouble.

'In April 1657' (continues Dr. Firth) 'the conditions were far more favourable to the prospects of such a rising than they were in 1661; the number of malcontents was greater, the Government was less securely established, and the slightest success gained by the insurgents would have emboldened the Royalists to attempt to restore the King, and the Commonwealth men to re-establish the republic. It was the perfection of Thurloe's police system, not the military strength of the Government, which prevented the public peace being broken. And this vigilance was never more needed . . . for the design for the assassination of the Protector was still being carried on.'

Sexby had, in fact, never given up the idea, and though the prospective rising of the Fifth Monarchy Men had kept him and his supporters quiet for the time, they were not discouraged by its suppression. Sexby himself, Titus * wrote to Hyde, would shortly set out for England instead of leaving the business to agents. And as a preliminary, these two, Sexby and Titus in collaboration, wrote a pamphlet which undoubtedly caused some sensation, though less, perhaps, than it is often credited with. Formerly

* A man of some education, a presbyterian and soldier of the Parliament during the early part of the Civil War, but at this time a very advanced Royalist. For his future career, see Dictionary of National Biography

Dr. Firth attributed the authorship to Sexby alone; now, on what seem sufficient reasons, he believes that the pamphlet was a joint production. For

'Sexby was not a man of much literary skill or historical knowledge; but he found in the person of Captain Titus just the helper he needed. Sexby contributed to the common work a passionate hatred of Cromwell and a democratic enthusiasm which he sincerely felt, and expressed at times with a certain eloquence. Titus polished Sexby's periods, pointed his invective, supplied the necessary learning, and seasoned the whole with a satirical wit rare in the controversial literature of the time. Their pamphlet, to which they gave the felicitous title of "Killing no Murder," undertook to prove that the assassination of the Protector was both lawful and laudable.'

The title of this celebrated pamphlet is in itself almost a sufficient revelation of its contents, of which, however, Dr. Firth gives a lengthy abstract. A tyrant is described as one 'over 'whom every man is naturally a judge and executioner, whom 'the laws of God, of nature, and of nations expose like beasts 'of prey, to be destroyed as they are met.' After this come three questions: (1) Whether my Lord Protector be a tyrant or not? The answer is, of course, Yes. (2) If he be a tyrant, whether it be lawful to do justice upon him without solemnity; that is to kill him? Answer: Certainly. And (3) If it be lawful, whether it is likely to prove profitable or noxious to the Commonwealth? And the answer is: Most profitable. These answers, the sense of which we have given in one or two words, take several pages in Dr. Firth's abstract and still more in the pamphlet itself, which concludes something like this:

'To us—men of the army—"to us, particularly, it belongs to bring this monster to justice, whom he hath made the instruments of his villainy, and sharers in the curse and detestation that is due to himself from all good men; others only have their liberty to vindicate, we our liberty and our honour. . . . What the people at present endure, and posterity shall suffer, will be laid at our doors; for only we, under God, have the power to pull down this Dagon, which we have set up; and if we do it not, all mankind will repute us approvers of all the villainies he hath done, and authors of all to come" . . . every man to whom God had given wisdom and courage should consider it a duty to mankind "to endeavour by all natural means to free the world of this pest." . . . Let not this monster think himself secure because he had suppressed one great spirit, Sindercombe. . . . "There's a great roll behind . . . that are ambitious of the name of the deliverers of their country; and they know what the action is that will pur-

chase it. His bed, his table is not secure, and he stands in need of other guards to defend him against his own. Death and destruction pursue him wherever he goes; they follow him everywhere like his fellow-travellers, and at last they will come upon him like armed men.'"

The whole, bloodthirsty as its teaching is, and, as we have seen, not unpalatable on that account to even the best and most noble of the Royalists, conveyed that teaching with an ability and wit which were highly appreciated.

'To Royalist readers it seemed a masterpiece of satire and sound reasoning. Clarendon was charmed. "The whole piece," he told Nicholas, "is so full of wit that I cannot imagine who could write it." What pleased him most was the humour of dedicating to the Protector himself a pamphlet written "only to show the lawfulness and conveniency that he be presently killed." He pronounced the prefatory epistle to Cromwell "as witty a thing" as he had ever seen; and its grave irony set the whole of the King's party laughing.'

There is much more to the same effect, but this is enough. Clever though the pamphlet was, it was too late to do any harm. The free resolution of Parliament, confirming Oliver as Protector, rendered it absurd to speak of him as a usurper; and his refusal of the crown gave the lie to the charge of overweening ambition. Sexby was disappointed, and in the end of June crossed over to England in order to try what could be accomplished by personal influence. In less than a month he had convinced himself that the cause was hopeless, at least for the present, and was on the point of returning to Holland when he was betrayed, arrested, and thrown into the Tower. Before he could be brought to trial he fell ill of a fever, and eventually died, January 13, 1658.

There is a very common belief that Oliver was deeply affected by the publication of 'Killing no Murder,' that the terror of it was with him by day and the subject of his dreams by night. These were Royalist stories; Heath first published them in 1663; Clarendon followed, with embroidered versions; Hume repeated them, and they have been very generally accepted in all school histories. They seem to be altogether imaginary. Dr. Firth finds no trace of them anywhere as recorded—that is, by men who were in a position to know.

'Cromwell' (he says) 'took reasonable precautions and was properly guarded when he rode abroad, but that was all. . . . In reality Cromwell feared the face of no man, and was not perturbed

by imaginary dangers. At home and abroad he had more important things to think of.'

More important, indeed, and especially abroad; for from 1656 onwards the active war with Spain was calling for both energy and money. In the Netherlands nothing was to be done. The Hispano-Irish troops might be mustered, but in face of the English men-of-war it was impossible for them to put to sea. Off Cadiz the service was more arduous and more fatiguing; wearisome, too; for the Spaniards would neither fight nor trade. They had no strength to drive, or attempt to drive, the blockading force away, nor merchant ships that would try to break out. What the English had to do was to prevent any from breaking in; the intention being to bring pressure on to the Spanish Government by stopping or capturing the treasure ships on their way from the New World, and on the due arrival of which the Spanish Government was almost entirely dependent. It was not a service that required a very powerful fleet; and on June 30, 1656, Mountagu had written that twelve or fifteen 'nimble frigates' * were sufficient for all services in those seas, and would have a better chance of lighting on the plate fleet than a larger squadron.

Blake agreed with him; and, acting on this opinion, they left Stayner, the vice-admiral, with twelve ships to continue the blockade; ten were sent into the Channel to stop the unfriendly Dutch trade with Spain; others were sent on the coast of Galicia and westward to Santander and San Sebastian; others to Malaga, where they burnt what ships were there, fired several shots into the town, knocked down the church tower, spiked the guns on the mole, and sailed away triumphant. It was not much of an exploit—the resistance had been trivial; but the reputation of the Spaniards was still so high that people in general were disposed to magnify any advantage gained over them; and in England it was made the subject of a ballad, which, as sung through the streets of London, must have conveyed to the populace a very exaggerated idea of the achievement. And meanwhile Blake, with the main fleet, ranged along the African coast, looking out for 'a convenient harbour' which might be occupied permanently. Bugia was judged unsuitable; Oran was better, and might be captured from the Spaniards; better still, Tangier might be ceded by the Portuguese. The speculations were interesting, as the renewal of the proposal made, thirty years before, to seize on Gibraltar as

* The term 'frigate' was used in a very loose way. Some of these 'frigates' were 64-gun ships.

commanding the navigation of the Straits—that is, of the Mediterranean. The idea was, however, postponed, for Blake was called away to exert a pressure on the pirates of Sallee; and thence he rejoined Stayner off Cadiz, where he left him in the beginning of September and went to the Tagus.

And on September 9, Stayner, with his squadron of frigates, caught sight of the long-expected treasure ships. They had escaped Goodson, who, left in command of the West India fleet on Penn's return, had been vainly looking out for them off Havana. Stayner was more fortunate.

'On the evening of September 8, Captain Stayner, who had been driven out of Cadiz Bay by a gale, spied the Spanish ships five or six leagues to the westward of Cadiz, and at once gave chase. The unsuspecting Spaniards took Stayner's six ships for fishing-boats, and kept company with them all night, hanging out lights and firing guns, as it was their custom to do. Next morning, when Stayner bore up to engage, it was too late to escape. To a spectator his ships seemed small compared to the bulky galleons, but they seemed "all fire and sail." Half his squadron was too far to the leeward to take part in the engagement, but the three which did engage were his strongest ships.'

And so, of the seven Spanish ships two only escaped, and those of little value. The others were all captured, but two of them took fire, burnt, and went to the bottom with all their treasure and the greater part of their crews.

'From the nature of the fight the loss of the vanquished was far greater than the gain of the victors, and it was at first estimated that the loss of Spain amounted to nine million of pieces of eight, while the captured silver and merchandise were said to be worth half that sum.'

The news reached England on October 1. That very morning the Parliament had resolved that 'the war against the Spaniard' was undertaken upon just and necessary grounds, and for the 'good of the people of this Commonwealth,' and that, by God's blessing, 'it would assist his Highness therein.' The news of Stayner's good success, coming in the afternoon, appeared as the mark of God's blessing, and convinced even the doubters of the righteousness of the war. But it was a very serious question, how the cost of it was to be defrayed. The expense was estimated at nearly a million per annum, and it did not appear how this was to be met. Parliament was unwilling to vote new taxes, and hoped that the value of the capture might solve the problem, which, indeed, the reported five million pieces

of eight * would go far to do. Thurloe, in fact, wrote that it was more than had been reported, and was really near a million sterling. But when it was officially examined, it had shrunk enormously. If the estimated value was anything like correct, something like three-quarters of it had been plundered or embezzled; perhaps, as was said, by the officers and seamen, perhaps by the government appraisers. The truth was never known; the value in the first instance and the extent of the defalcation may have been exaggerated; but the certain fact remained, 'that the cost of the war could not be defrayed from 'this source.' Finally—but not before the middle of March—so intent was the House on the great domestic problem, the charge was laid mostly on the customs. 'It was supposed that the 'customs and excise would supply 900,000*l.* . . . and the 'Exchequer 200,000*l.* By an express provision, no part of it 'was to be raised by a land tax.'

To follow out the movements of the fleet in detail is here unnecessary, though Dr. Firth has done it in a manner at once clear and interesting. The main object still was to stop the Spanish trade with the West Indies and Central America; and, above all, to prevent the arrival of a plate fleet. For that, the blockade of Cadiz must be maintained, and the fleet must be prepared to meet any effort the Spaniards might make against it, either by force or otherwise. There was, too, continual apprehension that the Dutch might interfere, in order to carry on trade in their own name; or as engaged either to import the treasure in Dutch bottoms, or to protect the Spanish plate fleet with Dutch men-of-war. Ruyter, it was said, had sailed with a strong squadron, a numerous convoy and instructions not to permit the English claim to search his ships. He might have to be fought. These were the external difficulties, against which Blake and the officers under him had to guard; internally the difficulties were still greater. The ships were foul, many of them in bad condition; provisions were short, beverage wine was not to be had, and the men were sickly. Blake himself was in a very weak state of health. Notwithstanding all these drawbacks, the service was unflinchingly performed; allowing for the difference of vocabulary, Blake's letter written in Lagos Bay on February 9, 1657, might have been written by Nelson off Toulon in 1804.

'There is a great want of men, which cannot possibly be recruited here, and no provisions for sick and wounded, with many other

* Professor Firth reckons this at 600,000*l.*, counting the Mexican dollar at 2*s.* 6*d.* The more ordinarily received value of 4*s.* 2*d.* would give the amount as upwards of a million sterling.

discouragements. But the goodness of the Lord towards us and never to be forgotten is far greater than all the discouragements of men. Notwithstanding the great tempests of wind that we have encountered, without the Straits and within, we are all together and behold one another's face with comfort. The "George" and the "Unicorn" with the storeships are come to us in a seasonable time. And God has vouchsafed such weather that we have got out all very near. . . . The indisposition of my body permits me not to be more tedious.'

At last came the news for which they had waited so long. An English merchant ship, on her way from Barbados to Genoa, had seen the plate fleet steering for the Canaries. What happened there is told in every child's history book; but except the absurd and untrue dictum of Clarendon—of whom Granville Penn happily said, that he knew no more of seamanship than the average boatswain does of Chancery law—little is known of the action itself. And space will not permit us to follow Dr. Firth in his interesting details. It must suffice to say that Blake, not having the good fortune to meet the Spaniards at sea, found them (April 20) at Santa Cruz off Teneriffe, where they had placed the treasure—said to be upwards of ten millions of pieces of eight—in safety on shore up country. That could not be got at; but the ships could; and lying parallel to the shore, they masked the batteries, which were thus harmless to an enemy on the off side. Till the Spanish ships were all sunk, or taken and fired, the English sustained little damage. Then the batteries had their chance, if they could have availed themselves 'of it. But their gunnery was very bad, and 'the whole fleet 'had lost but fifty men killed and about 120 wounded.' The 'Speaker,' Stayner's ship, was the only one that received serious damage. She was dismasted, but was warped out and lay with the other ships within random shot of the forts, till, after sunset, the land breeze came to their assistance, and blew them out of the bay. They lay outside for two days repairing damage as they best could, and then—but not till then—the prevailing north-east wind ceased, and a rare wind from the south-west blew long enough to take them again off Cadiz. Parliament, which the news reached on May 28, received it with joy and surprise. A public thanksgiving was ordered, and honours and rewards were showered on Blake and his subordinates. Stayner was knighted. 'A success so sudden and overwhelming 'was more than they had dreamed of or hoped for.' It was of a very far-reaching effect.

'To Spain the consequences were not to be measured by its losses in men and money. Its existence as a great power depended on its

free intercourse with its American colonies, on its monopoly of colonial trade, on the uninterrupted flow of gold and silver from the colonies to the mother-country. The colonies, on the other hand, depended entirely upon Spain for their supply of the simplest necessaries and for all the manufactured goods which they consumed. Therefore the blow which Blake struck was felt at once on both sides of the Atlantic. Throughout Spanish America there was a sudden rise in the prices of all things which came from Europe. . . . "Unless," it was said, "they have a speedy supply, they will be constrained to trade with any nation that will bring them the necessaries that they want."'

They would be obliged, in fact, to break down their own monopoly, and invite the Dutch to a share of the trade which they had so carefully preserved. Above all, the non-arrival of the expected treasure disorganised the finances of Spain, and fatally hampered all the military operations of the government. In Portugal, which they were in a fair way to conquer, their army melted away; many of the soldiers died for want of food; others, getting neither food nor pay, deserted. In Flanders things were nearly as bad.

'During the campaigns of 1657 and 1658, their army was notably inferior in numbers to that of the French. Spain, moreover, was unable to fulfil its promises to Charles II, either with regard to the payment of his troops or to the provision of men and money for his expedition to England.'

On the coast of Spain the work was practically finished. The Spaniards would not venture other ships or further treasure, and Blake was ordered to return to England with the greater part of the fleet, leaving a sufficient force to continue the blockade of Cadiz, and to quell the piratical energy of the Africans. Blake, who had long been keeping up against wretched health, could do so no longer. His work was ended; it was his time for rest. He died under the flag, on board the 'George' as she entered Plymouth Sound on the morning of August 7. His body was embalmed, lay in state for some days at Greenwich (presumably in Queen's House), was taken by water, in a stately procession of barges, to Westminster and there buried in the Abbey—to be, after the Restoration, ignominiously chucked out, and 'flung into a pit somewhere in the green on the north 'side of the Abbey, between the north transept and the west 'end.'

Meantime, and to carry on hostilities at home as well as afloat, Oliver had signed a treaty (March 13, 1657) with Mazarin, who sorely wanted England's assistance in the Low Countries, where the fortune of war had been turning to his disadvantage. Oliver

thus appeared in the light of an auxiliary, who stipulated for very full remuneration for his services. Dunkirk was demanded for assistance by ships on the coast; the price to be paid for assistance also on land must be higher. It was finally agreed that Gravelines, Mardyke, and Dunkirk were all to be taken, and that these last two should be at once handed over to the English, as a return for the services of the fleet and of a corps of 6000 men on shore, to be fed and paid by France. These 6000 men were not, as is often said, a part of the army.

'About a quarter of their number consisted of soldiers drafted from the standing army in England; the remainder were volunteers, raised by beat of drum for this special service, and in many cases must have been raw recruits who had never seen service before.'

Many others, though now appearing as volunteers, had been soldiers in the Civil War, and resumed their old trade on the prospect of adventure. So also with the officers. Three of the six colonels were, or had been, in the Cromwellian army; two of the others had been in the Dutch service; the other was a soldier of fortune. Of the subordinate officers, about half had seen service in the army; many of the others were quite raw to the work, and none of them knew the men. The wonder is, not that troops so raised and officered did not do very well, but that they did not do very badly. Full of fight, they were, as was natural; but they showed to little advantage in the somewhat monotonous work of marching and countermarching; unaccustomed food rendered them sickly; the smallness of the French pay rendered them discontented, and the irregularity of it rendered them mutinous. It is an interesting chapter in the history of the English army that Dr. Firth has given us, and one which has been often misrepresented in telling of the much better work done afterwards by a corps of the Regular Army.

Yielding to the insistence of Mazarin, who was pressed by Oliver to the fulfilment of the treaty obligations, Turenne, in command of the army, laid siege to Mardyke, which surrendered on the fourth day (October 3, 1657), and was duly made over to the English. But it was too small to contain an effective garrison, and Dunkirk was only a league distant. A sharp attack from it was happily repulsed by the efforts of the small garrison, 'aided by the fire of the English ships in the harbour'; but Turenne, who had hastily marched to its support, pronounced it easy to take, difficult to keep, and proposed that it should be abandoned and destroyed.

'This suggestion caused the liveliest disgust and anger in the minds of the Protector, Lockhart (the English ambassador), and

the English leaders. . . . The Protector told Bordeaux (the French ambassador in London) that he would bid his troops evacuate Mardyke if Turenne ordered them to do so, but should consider the alliance at an end if it were done.'

Mardyke was accordingly kept, and in November Captain Sparling, who commanded the men-of-war on the coast, 'reported that unless the ships could be forced out of the road before Mardyke, and the victuals of the garrison cut off, 20,000 men would 'find it difficult to retake the place.' On the other hand, Mazarin had written to Lockhart that he had sure intelligence that

'the Spaniard intended to send into England, towards the latter end of January or the beginning of February, 3000 foot and 1000 horse under Charles II or the Duke of York, provided with artillery and with arms sufficient to equip 12,000 men.'

It was an empty threat as long as Sparling could keep his station ; but at the end of January the ships were forced off the coast by 'a sharp and violent north-east wind' and by 'the continual 'flowing in of the ice which came from the eastward.' In their absence, 'the Flemish privateers came out of Dunkirk, Ostend 'was free to serve as a place of embarkation, and the Spanish 'forces began to draw down to the coast as if they meant some-'thing.' People are apt to forget that the same stress of weather that compels the absence of the blockading squadron, renders it difficult, dangerous, or impossible for the blockaded to take advantage of their absence, which, in this case, at any rate, was but of short duration. Before the end of February the English squadron was back on the coast under the command of Goodson, preventing equally the proposed invasion of England, or the reinforcement of the Spanish army from San Sebastian.

The importance of this service was so evident that Oliver added considerably to the strength of the fleet, and in May sent Mountagu to take the command. Turenne was then drawing down to the coast, and on the 14th he laid siege to Dunkirk with an army of about 25,000 men, of whom 6000 were English, and, this time, soldiers of the Regular Army, the admiration—it is said—of the French. The capture of Dunkirk followed, within a few days, the Battle of the Dunes, of which Dr. Firth gives a singularly clear account, though mainly from the English point of view. To us the interest of it will always be in the part played by the English regiments, to which fell the storming of the sand-hill or 'dune' on the Spanish right, the key of the position.

Dr. Firth's account of this is excellent. It was no mere rush. A body of 'firelocks,' stationed right and left,

'fired continually at [the Spaniards] on the top of the hill, and Lockhart's men struggled up the sandy slopes that faced them. It was "more steep," said an English officer, "than any ascent of a breach that I have seen." "Our men," says another, "crept up the hill on hands and knees." Fenwick, Lockhart's lieutenant-colonel, was mortally wounded, and other officers fell too; but the regiment gained the top, fired a volley, and closing with the Spaniards, with levelled pikes and clubbed muskets, drove them from the hill. [They had] fought well, and left behind them, dead on the hill, seven out of their eleven captains.'

The French accounts do not differ as to the splendid conduct of our men; it may even be thought that they exaggerate it, for they describe them as repulsed twice or thrice, and returning to the assault, stubborn as ever. What is of more importance—at least from a tactical point of view—is their describing 'the 'fate of the struggle for the great dune as determined by a flank 'attack of the French cavalry on the Spanish cavalry in the rear 'of the infantry.' And this seems the more probable, although 'English accounts seem to place the appearance of the French 'cavalry later.' The 'great dune' was near the shore, which formed the only road between it and the sea. It was by it that the French cavalry advanced; and on it there were originally posted a strong body of Spanish horse, which was afterwards withdrawn, leaving the way clear. The question, asked then and now, is, Why? It seems to be answered by the contemporary narrative of the Chevalier de Clerville,* who, speaking of the 'grande faute' which the Spaniards had made, in leaving the passage unguarded, offers three reasons in explanation of it: (1) That they thought the dune so high and steep that it was more likely to give than to need support; (2) that the rising tide would itself make the way impassable, which, incidentally, any peasant of the neighbourhood could have told them it would not; and (3) 'que l'on avait appréhendé que les vaisseaux anglais ne 'vinssent bordayer au long de la rade opposée au champ de 'bataille, et qu'à coups de canon, ils n'eussent chassé la cavalerie 'qu'on avait mis dessus l'estran,' of which, he thinks, there was little danger, as the distance from which the ships would have to fire was too great.

* M. de Clerville was then in command of the Engineers. His narrative is printed in full by Bourelly in 'Deux Campagnes de Turenne.'

The effect of the blunder—if blunder it was, and not rather the fact that the Spanish cavalry was driven away by the threat or by the actual fire of the English ships—was that the French passed along the shore unmolested, and so came round to the rear of the dune. The movement was decisive ; but whether it was before or after the English battalions had driven the Spaniards from the top cannot now be determined. The evidence is conflicting, but—in our opinion—inclines to before. The English, climbing the hill on their hands and knees, or fighting hand-to-hand with pike and musket-butt, were in no position to take note of time, or sequence, or of what was going on elsewhere. With the capture of Dunkirk the war was virtually ended. Other operations there indeed were ; Gravelines and other places had to be reduced ; but the fall of Dunkirk, added to the destruction of the galleons at Santa Cruz, was really the deciding issue. These were staggering blows, and the Spaniards, not knowing what worse might come, hastened to make peace. But this was not in Oliver's time and does not fall within the scope of Dr. Firth's volumes.

In France, where the value of the English co-operation was very imperfectly known, and where it was believed that the success had been won entirely by the French arms, there was much indignation at the surrender of Dunkirk to the English ; but Mazarin, with the whole story spread out before him, knew better. He knew that even on shore the Spanish army had more than matched the French, without the English support, and that it was impossible to estimate the advantage derived from English assistance by sea, where—irrespective of Santa Cruz—it had prevented the arrival of reinforcements of men, stores or money, and had largely contributed to the reduction of Dunkirk and Gravelines.

'"Nothing," he has left on record—"nothing I have achieved is of any worth, but it is something to have known how to prevent the alliance between our enemies and England, which was about to come into being, and to have persuaded England to ally herself with us against them." On the alliance with England he set great value. It was capable, he told Cromwell after the victory of the Dunes, of bringing even greater advantages to the two nations, by constraining the Spaniards to give them a good peace as the best way of preventing further losses.'

We have found the purely English affairs of which Dr. Firth has treated so interesting, so engrossing, that we have left ourselves but little space for the foreign policy of the period, which, however, is of an interest second only to that of the other. With

a clearness which has never been excelled, Dr. Firth has traced the causes, conditions, and consequences of the Northern War, as between Sweden on the one side, Poland and Denmark on the other, with Austria as a doubtful ally, and Brandenburg, more openly selfish, watching for her opportunity. It might seem at first glance that here was surely a quarrel in which England had no interest, and which the belligerents might be left to settle in their own way. It was not so. The maritime interests at stake —involving possession of the port of Dantzic and the command of the Sound—meant practically the freedom or obstruction of the Baltic trade, and about that Oliver was determined there should be no doubt. He had no wish for any overpowering success of Sweden, or of Poland, or of Denmark, but was resolved that to the extent of his ability the balance should be maintained and trade rights should be respected. But these were the subject of much contention—by war between the belligerents, by diplomacy between the neutrals, and the interests of two of these last—the Dutch and the English—were so important that from day to day they might be expected to become principals. All this, added to the sentiment prevailing in England, that Sweden ought to be supported because she was Protestant, and that Poland was a natural enemy because she was Catholic—a sentiment which Oliver also felt, though his strong political sense discounted the value of it—is treated of by Dr. Firth in three deeply interesting chapters, in which, though no finality is reached, the end is seen dimly outlined: Poland to be left in possession of Dantzic, Sweden with its natural boundary on the south, and sharing equally with Denmark the control of the passage into the Sound.

Still more important are the chapters which treat of the state of Scotland and of Ireland; this last especially must be read and re-read and studied with care by anyone who wishes to gain an understanding of the Irish problem of to-day. Not that this will give him a complete solution of it. Far from that; but it will lead him towards a glimmering light.

The difficulty of governing Ireland in peace was no new one. It had been felt in the time of the Plantagenets, of the Roses, of the Tudors, and again under the Stuarts; but it was as if all the difficulties of all the ages, and of the early days of the Republic were stirred up together to be put before Henry Cromwell, the Commander-in-Chief and Lord Deputy. It was not merely 'to force a recalcitrant people,' who had been subdued in a brutal and savage war, to submit to a foreign rule, but as governor of a colony planted among these 'recalcitrant people,'

he was bound to secure the support and co-operation of the colonists.

'His task was further complicated by the divisions among the colonists themselves—divisions both political and religious. Part of them had fought for the monarchy and part for the republic; some were Episcopalians, some Presbyterians, some Independents, some Anabaptists. His mission in Ireland was to unite the different parties and sects among the Protestants, not merely to complete the distribution of the confiscated lands of the natives.'

These natives, if they had been rationally dealt with, would possibly have been the easiest managed. Individually they were most lovable; and in spite of repeated orders the soldiers habitually took Irish wives. Their children or grandchildren were Catholics and spoke no English. Their descendants, mostly found now in Tipperary, seem to mingle the stern, unflinching resolution of the Puritan soldier with the traditional vivacity and fire of the Celt. But then, and before and since, the governing power went wrong in determining to enforce on them an alien religion. 'The Irish clung to their creed as the 'last relic of their national independence'; and though they might have yielded in time to gentle and Christian persuasion, they, with the stubbornness of martyrs and the sentiment of nationality, refused to be converted by a tyranny that had nothing Christian about it but the name.

The government of Henry Cromwell was humane, according to its lights, and honestly endeavoured to ameliorate the state of the country, to quiet dissensions, to promote sobriety and industry, to advance the cause of education and religion—but all for the benefit of the Protestant colonists. The native Irish were as wild beasts to be herded into a corner; and, as the ghosts of the Red Indians of America, or of the black fellows of Tasmania and Australia could tell, when the Englishman gives his mind to brutality he can be very brutal indeed. Added to this, the financial difficulty, which, indeed, principally affected the colonists, but gave even them a sense of tyranny and oppression which, as they intermarried with the natives, they conveyed to their descendants, and so it remains. Dr. Firth goes at some length into the arithmetic of the question, which we must here pass by, referring those of our readers who wish to do so to his calculations; but the result may be shortly stated thus: England deemed it necessary that an army and a civil establishment should be maintained in Ireland; the strength and numbers of the establishment were fixed in England; the soldiers and the civil servants had to be paid, and England refused to contribute

more than a small part of the sums necessary ; the rest was to be raised by the colonists. It was the English colonial policy which was at fault—the policy of attempting the administration and taxation of the colonists by men at a distance, who were totally ignorant of the local conditions.

'The financial difficulty' (says Dr. Firth) 'was not the result of maladministration in Ireland, but of the deliberate policy of the English Government. A policy of confiscation and intolerance had caused an excessive military expenditure ; and this was inevitably increased when the details of that military expenditure were determined by the English Council in the interests of the English army, rather than by the Irish Council in the interests of the English colony in Ireland.'

A persistence in the same methods, the same general policy, led one hundred years later to discontent, trouble, revolt and loss on the other side of the Atlantic ; after which our House of Commons began to realise that it did not know everything about colonial government, though even yet it is far from having attained to an adequate knowledge of the fact.

The want of money, which was the cause of so much embarrassment in Ireland, was felt also in England, though not in the same way nor to the same extent. Still it was very great, and grew greater every month.

'In January, 1658, the pay of the soldiers was so many months in arrear that the Protector admitted there was "fear of being necessitated to take free quarter upon the people" ; while supplies for the navy were so short that men-of-war had to be kept at sea because there was no money to pay the sailors when they came in. . . . "The great want is money, which puts us to the wall in all our business," wrote Thurloe on March 16. In April things were no better. "The clamours which we have, both from sea and land, are such that they can scarce be borne." In July the credit of the Government was completely exhausted. "We are at that pass for money that we are forced to go a-begging to particular aldermen of London for five or six thousand to send to Dunkirk, and I fear we shall be denied." '

These extracts give a clear idea of the difficulty of the situation ; and thus the domestic interest of this period is mainly financial ; but the details of a Budget would make dry reading and cannot be summarised.

'The initial debt with which the Protectorate had begun its career had been regularly swollen by annual increments till it had become an imminent and pressing danger of the State. All that could be done to lessen the expenditure was to reduce the number of

ships at sea, and to diminish to a limited extent the number of the army. But without money to pay off the seamen and the disbanded soldiers this course was practically impossible, and money in any sufficient quantity could only be obtained in one way.'

This was to appeal to Parliament; but at the time there was no Parliament. The second Parliament had been dissolved, in what might almost be called a *coup d'état*, to prevent the presentation to it of a revolutionary petition 'praying, in general terms, for 'the restoration of the Republic.'

'This meant the restoration of the Long Parliament, or some new Parliament invested with the same absolute authority, neither restricted by the existence of a Second Chamber with a share in legislation, nor by the existence of a Protector with a veto on the laws it passed. It meant a Parliament unlimited by any written Constitution, whether such a one as the Instrument of Government had been, or such as the Petition and Advice was. In short, it struck at the root of the existing Government.'

The petition was not presented, for there was no Parliament to receive it; but now there was also no Parliament to vote the money, and the Ministry were at their wits' ends. A Parliament must be called, but it seemed useless to call one under existing conditions. Almost every day it became more clear that the relations between the army and the Parliament must be remodelled; and above all that Oliver must accept the crown. His objections, too, seemed to have been overcome. The present embarrassment threw any future difficulties into the shade.

'The only doubt was whether he would assume it before Parliament met, which it was thought by some would facilitate his dealings with that body, or whether he would wait till Parliament renewed the offer. . . . Foreign ambassadors reported the coming event to their courts. "It is certain," wrote Bordeaux, "that the re-establishment of royalty is determined on. A large part of the officers have already supported it, recognising that it is the only way to assure the peace of the nation and to extract money from it." . . . In May there was great talk in London of the preparations being made for the coronation.'

Everything pointed to the same end. And then, just as things seemed arranging themselves in the most satisfactory manner, the blow fell, and they arranged themselves quite otherwise. For years, Oliver's health had been very precarious; dysentery or fever and ague had racked him over and over again; and in 1658, worry, anxiety and incessant work had severely strained

his exhausted constitution. In February died Robert Rich, the husband of his daughter Frances. In July his grandson, Oliver Claypole, died also; and the boy's mother, Mrs. Claypole, Oliver's favourite daughter, died on August 6. Against public anxiety and private grief his debilitated body could no longer endure. There would seem to have been a general break-up. We are told of fever, gout, of 'other distempers,' and what the French ambassador describes as 'une colique pierreuse.' Any one of them would have probably been sufficient for deciding the destiny of the country. The accumulation was more than sufficient. Oliver died on September 3, naming—but in an unsatisfactory way, without any formalities—his eldest son as his successor. The great Protector was dead, and with his death Dr. Firth brings his volumes to a close. They do not reach the actual end of the Protectorate, the story of which belongs to the re-establishment and failure of the Republic and the restoration of the Monarchy, all of which we may hope Professor Firth will in due time lay before us.

Art. X.—THE NEW PARLIAMENT AND THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

It is impossible to doubt that the division in the House of Lords at midnight on November 30, 1909, marks a very definite point in English political history. Five months have elapsed, a General Election has taken place, a new Parliament has assembled at Westminster, yet almost before the debate on the address to the King's Speech was concluded men were talking, as they have been doing ever since, of a new appeal to the electorate! Taxes voted by huge majorities in the late House of Commons have not been voted in this one, and in large part are not being collected, whilst the new House votes vast increases of the Estimates for the ensuing year, without any indication being given as to how the necessary revenue is to be provided. The non-reduction of the National Debt and the borrowing of sufficient to pay current expenses are the immediate measures to which the Government and the House of Commons have recourse in anticipation of a time when some one in some way or other will restore order to our financial system. The present spectacle is not one which 'tends to edification'!

By their division the Peers had, of course, for the time being killed the Budget. But they had in fact done much more than that, for their action was bound to bring forward for practical solution questions of the deepest constitutional importance to the nation. Till these questions are satisfactorily dealt with there will be little political rest for England. Practical reform, much needed in various directions, will have to be postponed, whilst men give themselves to the unaccustomed work, not so much of repairing, as of reconstructing one of the branches of the Legislature.

When Mr. Lloyd George's measure, after prolonged discussion and very considerable amendment in the House of Commons, at last reached the House of Lords the Peers had before them two courses. They might pass it with a strong protest, or they might reject it altogether. They may well have felt, and undoubtedly many of them did feel, that since the Budget only dealt with the proposed taxation to be raised within the year ending on April 1, and Christmas was then only a few weeks distant, no very revolutionary consequence could actually result from its passing. Further taxation would, of course, be regulated not by this Budget and this Chancellor of the Exchequer but by the Budgets and Chancellors of the Exchequer of future years. Moreover, at the time it was the common

belief that in any case the Parliament would not last much longer, and that in the spring or summer of 1910 Mr. Asquith would dissolve. The Conservatives expressed great confidence that in a new House of Commons they would be in a majority, a result to which it was thought the irritation caused by the operation of the Budget would not a little conduce. The leaders of the Conservative party were pledged to the removal of the greater inequalities and injustices of the Lloyd George scheme, and there was therefore an excellent prospect that in proper constitutional fashion the Budget would shortly be revised by the only competent authority, without its having been necessary to have recourse to the extra-constitutional powers of the House of Lords. Hence, many of the more level-headed and experienced of the Peers would undoubtedly have preferred to pass the Budget to adopting the violent and unprecedented expedient of refusing to the Crown the supplies of the year.

As a party move the action of the House of Lords may for the moment have been attended with success. Whether the step was wise or unwise in the greater interests of the nation will not for some time become clear. Neither party caucuses nor party newspapers can be expected to take long views, and there really seem to have been many simple people who supposed that nothing out of the common had taken place, that a new Budget, framed so as to meet the approval of the Peers, would be introduced and passed, and that then everything would go on as before. Already these pleasant anticipations have received a shock in the discovery that nothing has been settled, that something like temporary financial chaos has been reached, and that the prospect of stable government seems more remote than ever. In the remarkable debate in the House of Lords in November, upon which we commented last January, a good many individual Peers evidently saw clearly the danger of the course upon which the majority were bent. The powerful speeches of Lord Balfour, of Lord James, and of the Archbishop of York, were followed by the abstention from the division of men like Lord Rosebery, Lord St. Aldwyn, Lord Cromer and others, whose disapproval of the Budget did not blind them to all the consequences that would flow from its summary rejection.

Even now there are many who do not recognise that the claim of the House of Lords to accept or refuse at their own discretion the grants of supply made by the Commons, to and at the request of the Sovereign, is in fact a claim to *govern*. Students of foreign, of American and of Colonial Constitutions find provisions under which some, occasionally much, financial authority is vested in the 'Senate.' And forthwith, without

apparently being the least aware of the utterly different conditions under which our Constitution works, they are ready to concede to the House of Lords even more financial authority than in the last few months it has claimed! In America the Executive of the United States is independent of, because it does not derive its power from, Congress. The chief motive power that has of late impelled the action of the House of Lords with us is its desire to rid the country of an Executive Government to which it is politically opposed.

How is a Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer to secure the support of a majority of a permanently Conservative House of Lords for his Budget? A Budget is an annual necessity. The imposition of taxes, the raising of additional revenue, is generally a thankless and unpopular duty. That the people at large will benefit by the taxation of the rich is difficult to establish. That Tariff Reformers can produce general prosperity by the imposition of import duties is hardly less of a delusion. Taxes, whether direct or indirect, are in themselves an evil, and make against general prosperity; but it is by taxes that revenue must be obtained. When Mr. Lloyd George tells us that he is the friend of the poor man because he is heavily taxing the rich one, or when Mr. Austen Chamberlain would have us believe that he will cure unemployment and make every trade and business spin by recurring to the exploded doctrines of Protection, we remain equally sceptical and unmoved. The only justification for taxation in such a country as ours is the necessity of revenue; and how that can be raised with least disturbance of private interests, and least injury to business, is the question our statesmen have to solve. A Budget which makes a heavy drain on the pockets of the public will generally be unpopular. A Ministerial majority often dwindles largely as such a measure struggles through the House of Commons. What chance will it have in the future against a party majority of Peers in the other House, honestly convinced above all things that the greatest service they can render to the State is to destroy a Liberal Ministry, which they can do at once by refusing the supplies? Up to six months ago, it can be asserted, without fear of contradiction, that every constitutional authority—statesman or writer—would have deemed the rejection by the House of Lords of the annual supplies voted by the House of Commons, a proceeding outside the practice of the Constitution. This, however, has been done, and now it is asserted that the House of Lords has, and ought both to have and to exercise, the authority hitherto denied to it. We do not ourselves share the opinion that it is mere 'political pedantry' to treat with respect

the constitutional views of a long line of British statesmen. But what impresses us at the present time far more than authority, even the highest, is the difficulty, nay the impossibility, of working our old system under the new conditions. Measures might easily be taken to safeguard the House of Lords against 'tacking,' but the claim now made on behalf of the Peers goes far beyond the assertion of their old and entirely reasonable objection to the addition by the House of Commons of non-financial and foreign matter to finance Bills with a view to ousting the Lords from their lawful and constitutional jurisdiction over ordinary non-financial measures.

To men practically conversant with our parliamentary system the possession of office and power by a Ministry which does not control the finances is hardly thinkable. Mr. Asquith last December, after the division in the House of Lords, had every right to resign. The Opposition had refused to his Ministry the supplies granted by the Commons. It then became the duty of those responsible for that refusal themselves to provide the means for 'carrying on the King's Government.' The resignation of the Ministry would have made clear to the country the real issue that the House of Lords had raised—viz., who is to govern. Mr. Asquith, however, elected to go on in the expectation that in a few weeks a General Election would restore to him the financial authority of which he was temporarily deprived. The Budget rejected by the Peers on November 30 would be introduced at the earliest possible moment into the new House of Commons. The House of Lords had expressed its willingness to accept it at the hands of a House of Commons fresh from the constituencies, and thus at first sight it appeared that the financial authority of the Ministry, temporarily suspended, was to be at once restored to it.

This, however, was not to be, for in the new House of Commons the Prime Minister is not supported by an efficient majority, unless, besides his own following, he can count upon the assistance of two groups of members who owe him no allegiance—the Irish Nationalist party, and the Labour party. The result of the General Election had been to wipe out the large majority which orthodox Liberals possessed in the last Parliament over the followers of Mr. Balfour. In nine cases out of ten, it is true, the Labour members might be trusted to vote with the Liberals. Of the Irish Nationalists, however, it is notorious that many disliked the Budget. Negotiations took place with the result that the Budget, the immediate cause of the General Election, has not, so far, made its reappearance, and the Prime Minister himself within the last fortnight of the financial year has had to

explain that the votes in supply, and the power given by Parliament of borrowing against them, enable him for the time being to pay his way; and that though it is highly desirable, as soon as is convenient, to place on the Statute Book the Finance Bill for 1909–10 there is no actual compulsion in the circumstances to require the passing the Budget at all! *

The difficulties of Mr. Asquith's position have been great, and we certainly do not blame him or the Ministry for refusing to take the advice of their opponents to proceed with the Budget not as a whole, but bit by bit. This would be to recur to the practice abolished by Mr. Gladstone in 1860, and to put once more into the hands of the House of Lords a power of controlling the finances, which up to the date of the present controversy no party in the State ever dreamed of restoring to them. Where the action of the Ministry is much more open to criticism is in their determination to postpone the Budget in deference to the wishes, possibly the threats, of the Irish Nationalists. If the majority of the House of Commons are not in favour of the Asquith and Lloyd George Budget on its merits, the present Ministry ought not to remain in office; and it should be left to Mr. Balfour and Mr. Austen Chamberlain to bring forward a budget of their own, or rather two budgets of their own—that for 1909–10, and that for 1910–11. A Government's first duty is to govern, and though it may be possible, as Mr. Asquith says, for a Ministry to make shift for a time without a Budget by means of borrowing in order to pay current expenses, it is surely essential to the reputable carrying on of the national business that expenditure should be balanced by revenue raised on principles laid down by Ministers of the Crown and approved by the representatives of the people. Mr. Asquith in December elected, rightly or wrongly, not to resign, but to dissolve on the Budget. That step having been taken, the second step should have been at the earliest possible moment to ascertain whether the Budget had or had not the support of the new House of Commons. If not, it would be far better that Ministers should have at once resigned rather than that they should remain in office without the authority and the responsibilities which ought to belong to a Government. The policy of Ministerialists is accounted for by their desire to take up the question of the House of Lords. The financial control, recently claimed by that House, raises, as we have said, a question of urgent importance, and the sooner it is finally settled the better. As for the reconstitution of a Second Chamber on a new basis, or the general recasting of its

* Mr. Asquith at Oxford. Times, March 19, 1910.

powers as one of the branches of the Legislature, the whole subject deserves a great deal more consideration than it has yet received, and it is very undesirable in the public interest, however it may suit the exigencies of party, that it should be 'rushed.' There is no sufficient justification that we can see for the Government's postponing the regularisation—indeed the rescue from chaos—of the national finances, in order not merely to settle the question of financial control, but in order at once to embark on a great constitutional struggle as to the composition and general functions of a Second Chamber.

What is the true interpretation of the late General Election? Some explain it one way, some another; each in accordance with his own wishes. And as in these days so much stress is laid upon what is called a 'national mandate,' before which Lords and Commons are alike expected to bow, doubt as to the meaning of the commands laid upon Parliament by the electorate cannot but produce dire confusion. Mr. Asquith at Oxford says that 'the absolute veto,' as he calls it, 'of the Lords upon 'legislation must go.' That was 'the issue that was submitted 'to the electorate.' Now is that the truth, or the whole truth, or indeed anything like the truth? Surely the merits and demerits of the Budget, the question of Protection versus Free Trade, the Navy scare, were of far greater interest to the electors than the Campbell-Bannerman or Asquith resolution about the so-called 'veto.' There can be no doubt of this, if the speeches of candidates, election posters and literature, and articles in newspapers are evidence of general feeling. There is, it need scarcely be said, no connexion whatever between belief in Free Trade and a desire to establish a single chamber Parliament for purposes of general legislation. It is, in truth, impossible to claim a final national verdict for any single one of the half-dozen important issues upon which, in January last, the electorate voted.

In these days when so much is being said about the 'hereditary 'principle' as the basis of the House of Lords, and in the midst of all this talk about 'mandates,' we sometimes wonder what has happened to the 'representative principle'—the supposed basis of the House of Commons. The nation has just elected, after a good deal of trouble, 670 gentlemen to represent it at Westminster. They are, we have not the least doubt, fully capable of performing that high and all-important function. A general election is neither a 'plébiscite' nor a 'referendum'—pieces of a constitutional machinery entirely foreign and opposed to English ways and habits of thought. It is the choice by the constituencies of responsible and self-respecting members of Parliament to do the political work of the nation. If we are

to talk of 'mandates' at all it is as well to remember that there is a general, if an implied, mandate given to every member of the House of Commons—viz., that he must look to the good government of the country. In any great crisis, the House of Commons would, we trust, show itself worthy of its ancient fame. Its members are not merely counters in a party game; they are the selected of the nation which it is their duty to serve—an honourable service indeed, but one which may sometimes call for no little moral courage and even personal sacrifice. Probably the safest interpretation of the General Election is the one that is most general and least definite. In many districts of the Kingdom men are elected with reference solely to local questions; but looking very broadly at the whole United Kingdom one can hardly help concluding that the country is on the one hand less radical, less anxious for sweeping constitutional changes, than the Ministry of Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George; and on the other hand is strongly opposed to the fiscal revolution advocated by the Tariff Reformers.

We hope that those who lead the House of Commons on the one side and the other are going to treat that assembly seriously—above all, that it is going to treat itself seriously as having been elected to take into consideration the affairs of the nation, and to give its confidence to statesmen capable of guiding the country in times certainly of difficulty, and perhaps of danger. It is not easy to believe that Parliament is to be dissolved, almost before it has been consulted; in order that on the same electoral register we may have a renewal of the struggle between Radical and Protectionist caucuses; whilst the country is to go on for an indefinite period without a Budget, with the finances in confusion, and all practical legislation postponed. What advantages would a second General Election in the present year bring to the nation? Is there any prospect of a Parliament strong enough either to trample under foot the Free Traders of the industrial North of England and of Scotland, or to sweep out of our constitution every semblance of an effective Second Chamber? Changes of such magnitude ought not to be carried out unless there is a considerable preponderance of opinion in their favour. That this is not so the late General Election has shown. Surely our statesmen, Liberal or Conservative, would do well for the time to accept results, though somewhat negative in character, rather than plunge the country into fresh turmoil in the hope of something good 'turning up' for the one party or the other.

At the late General Election, for the first time in English history, Peers systematically took part in electioneering, behaving in every way as if they were themselves electors, and as

if it were their duty to concern themselves in the choice of men to represent them in the House of Commons. Till very recent times it would have been impossible for a peer to come on to a candidate's platform during a contested election. Had some great Tory peer and county magnate ventured upon such a step in his own neighbourhood, the democratic spirit of the electorate would in nine cases out of ten have been roused to such a pitch that the interference, as it would have been considered, with the business of the electors would have told most effectively against the great man's protégé. Readers of Trollope may possibly remember the famous county election where, though under the British Constitution neither peers nor women were entitled to take part, everyone in the county was aware that the contest was really waged between the Duke of Omnium and Miss Dunstable. There never was a time when in fact the political support of a peer did not count for much at an election in his own neighbourhood; but still a good deal of public deference was paid to the theory that the peer represented himself in the House of Lords; that the House of Commons and the House of Lords were entirely separate and independent bodies, and that, inasmuch as electors had nothing to do with the House of Lords, the Peers ought to have nothing to do with the House of Commons. In England it is sometimes not quite easy to reconcile theory and practice. As regards the House of Commons the theory of representation always held; but nevertheless before 1832 the representation in fact of a large number of constituencies was in the hands of the King, or of Peers, or of some other private patron. The late Mr. James Lowther used to move year after year to rescind the standing order of the House of Commons intended to restrain the Peers from interfering in elections, urging that such a rule had become obsolete, and was, moreover, of no legal effect. Mr. Balfour always supported it, as amounting at least to a public declaration that the Peers and the electors had different and separate fields for their political activity; and it was not till the present Session that the House of Commons, under the leadership of Mr. Asquith, formally and unanimously abrogated it.

One result will certainly follow this new departure of the Peers and its approval by the House of Commons. If it is permissible, and becomes the practice, for them to take an active part in the elections, the House of Commons will be thrown open to such of them as are willing to stand and can secure the support of a constituency. It was a marked feature of the Peers' campaign that for the most part they were perfectly ready not to insist on their hereditary claims to legislate. They told us, indeed, in some cases with a most

amusing self-complacency, that the statesmanlike virtues and the spirit of patriotic independence shone in the House of Lords with a brilliance quite unknown in ' another place,' where the members were little better than slaves to party, and the puppets of the caucus. In this matter they failed to realise the feelings of the average elector. He also in his humble way has hereditary instincts ; one of them being a preference for taxing himself through a representative whom he selects and may dismiss, to being taxed by superior persons over whom he has no control. Individually the Peers are popular ; and the House of Lords has hitherto by virtue of the Constitution been saved from the disagreeable and unpopular duty which plays so large a part in the functions of the House of Commons—viz., the imposition of taxes. Should the House of Lords acquire authority to reject or mould Budgets, to favour indirect as against direct taxation, to lighten the burden on one class of the community and to increase it on another, it will rouse a spirit of resistance such as the Peers have never yet had to meet, and may make them wish they had left the taxes to the Commons.

In this rationalising age it is impossible to justify to a public audience the soundness of a purely hereditary basis for a Legislative Assembly. In the multitude of Legislatures founded by Englishmen and their descendants in various parts of the world, the hereditary principle has found no place. In former times in England the House of Lords stood for a great fact. The magnates of whom it was composed possessed much power, to which fortunately the Constitution gave legitimate expression. It has been the signal merit of our Constitution that it has been capable of modification so as to keep abreast of the facts. In this twentieth century of ours Great Britain, like the United States, like Canada, and like our other great Colonies, can only be governed by the frank acceptance of democratic principles. We have to reconcile old forms with modern sentiment and habit of thought. Everywhere the theory that one man is as good as another is recognised as lying at the base of modern constitutional systems. For instance, if the application of the principle of ' one man one vote ' is to be resisted, it must be by founding on the no less democratic principle of ' one vote one value.' The modern peer on the platform, nay, the House of Lords itself, to-day rests the defence of the Upper Chamber on the alleged fact that it is occasionally a truer representative of the British people—of its considered judgment and permanent wishes than is the House of Commons. Peers do not say, at least in terms, that they are wiser and therefore more likely to be right than the people. They ask for a ' mandate ' from the people, whom they believe they interpret more truly than the House of

Commons. For the House of Lords also, Democracy is absolute king. The only question is how best to carry out the monarch's wishes.

There being apart from the financial issue so much agreement as to fundamentals between politicians of all parties, statesmanship should surely be able to find a way out of the present impasse. The time seems to have come for another step forward in the direction of democratising our constitutional system and forms. Hitherto such advances have been made by reforming the House of Commons. On each occasion loud has been the clamour of those opposed to change. We were 'on the brink 'of revolution.' We were 'Americanising our Constitution.' We were 'shooting Niagara.' We were talking about 'our own 'flesh and blood.' For our part we believe that the bringing the Constitution into conformity with modern facts and with the accepted political principles of our time is what has saved it, and makes it still live. As we have said, everywhere nowadays, and in the House of Lords itself, men accept Democracy. Yet the formal constitution of that Chamber has remained unchanged. It reflects much credit on the good sense of the country and of the Peers themselves that a continually reformed House of Commons and an unreformed House of Lords should have been able to work so long side by side, and on the whole satisfactorily. It is now the turn of the House of Lords to be reformed in conformity with the necessities and ideas of our own time; and if English statesmanship is not very inferior to that of past days the country should ultimately get a Second Chamber far better suited than the present one to perform the very important functions that belong to it.

The conservative instincts of Englishmen are very strong. Otherwise the modern practice of the almost reckless creation of hereditary legislators would have broken down from its intrinsic absurdity. A man makes a large fortune and pecuniarily assists his party; or he proves himself a good judge, or a competent general. He is made a peer forthwith; and to the end of time the descendants of the brewer, the lawyer, and the soldier are privileged to make laws for the British people! There is a sentiment and a glamour attached to the names of those who in the past have done the State some service. We gain a sense of the continuity of our history from the constant recurrence in our national life of generation after generation of our old families. Such sentiments are not to be despised. But after all no one proposes to bar the descendants of Peers from political life. They will no more disappear than did those country gentry whose doom

Mr. Lowe so eloquently predicted in the Reform Bill struggles of 1866–1867. The opening of the House of Commons to Peers will very probably increase the part played in political life by the inheritors of great names. At the present time it would be easy to name a dozen highly competent men whose political career has been destroyed or stunted by the fact that their energies were confined to the field of the Upper House. It would be not less easy to name others—Sir Edward Grey is one—whose position and weight in the State would have been far less than it is, had they not been eligible to sit in the House of Commons.

It will be very unfortunate if political parties tend to divide themselves between friends of the House of Commons and friends of the House of Lords. The two Chambers have different functions to perform. No one can enter either without at once being struck by the difference. The House of Commons represents the nation in all its varieties and classes, rich and poor, Church and dissent, professional, agricultural, commercial, industrial. Popular discontent and general or local grievance there rightly find a voice. Whatever faults can be brought against its manners, and these are much exaggerated, no one can fail to see that the Assembly is instinct with life and power. In the composition of the House of Lords, on the other hand, there is evidently less variety. The social atmosphere is that of a West End Club. A sense of complacent satisfaction with the world as it is is all pervading. No one could suppose that popular discontent or grievance would make head or even gain attention in an assembly of such men. Even where dissatisfaction, discomfort, and political discontent prevail widely, indeed on an almost national scale, as in Ireland, no whisper of the prevalent feeling makes itself heard in the House of Lords. A Chamber in which no one feels or understands grievances will be long in trying to remedy those of which only a distant echo reaches the ear. Whatever changes may be in store for us the House of Commons will remain the exponent of national feeling. It will continue to be the ultimate depository of national power ; and it is there that the political energy of the foremost Englishmen of the day will find a field.

The function of the Second Chamber is a totally different one ; and it is not infrequently, in our opinion, much misrepresented by those who pose as the friends of the House of Lords. To trust to that Chamber as a permanent bulwark against ' Socialism,' or the founding of a separate political nationhood in Ireland is to lean on a broken reed. What a Second Chamber should do for us is to give us time. When Mr. Gladstone sprang Home Rule on the country in 1886, the House of Commons, truly interpreting

the national feeling, rejected it. His scheme was then kept concealed till, some six years later having a majority (though not a British one) behind him, he again showed his hand. Even then the proposal to dissolve the Union was disapproved by the majority of the representatives of Great Britain—the 'pre-'dominant partner.' The Bill was nevertheless forced through the House of Commons, largely undebated, by all the pressure that could be brought to bear by a Government daily at the mercy of Irish Nationalists. The House of Lords most rightly rejected the measure, thereby in all probability saving Ireland from civil war, and earning the gratitude and approval of the British people, as was made manifest even to Home Rulers at the next General Election. Nevertheless, no Unionist, at least assuredly no Liberal Unionist, would think of resting the permanent maintenance of the Union between Great Britain and Ireland on the anti-Home Rule sentiment of the House of Lords. To check, to revise, to amend, to debate, are the most useful duties which the Second Chamber has to perform. And the more it can exercise its functions independently of mere party considerations the better it will serve the country.

The desirability of some Second Chamber is almost universally admitted. It has hitherto, however, been taken for granted that the House of Commons, not the House of Lords, should be supreme over the Executive, supporting or dismissing it; that it should be supreme also over finance, which indeed is involved in its control of the Government; and that it should bear the chief burden and responsibility in the work of legislation. Few of the great and wise measures introduced in the past half-century by Liberal Governments have found favour with the House of Lords; but when they came before it supported by the authority of Ministers of the Crown, including some of the most eminent men in their own House, and backed by decisive majorities of the House of Commons, the Peers did the best they could under the circumstances. For the most part they recognised the House of Commons as the exponent of the national will; and they modified, sometimes very usefully, what seemed to them the harsher or cruder or most violent portions of the reforms submitted to them. In constitutional theory the House of Commons and the House of Lords are indeed of co-equal authority in the ordinary business of legislation; but in practice for a very long time past the main responsibility for legislation has rested upon the Commons.

It is impossible to praise too highly the spirit with which, under the guidance of Lord Rosebery, the Peers have recently approached the subject of their own reform. Had his advice

been listened to, severe critic though he was of the Budget, the House of Lords would never have made the mistake of rejecting that measure, and so playing into the hands of its most violent opponents, by claiming over finance a novel authority which it is quite impossible to allow them. The reform of the House of Lords is no new subject with Lord Rosebery. For the last quarter of a century he has seen that it was bound to come; and the increasing rapidity with which its numbers have been added to in recent years must, if it is to continue, very soon make it impossible to go on without a change. The events of the last four or five years have now made the reform of the House of Lords a question of the first necessity; and Lord Rosebery comes forward, in advance of the Government proposals, to invite the Peers themselves to take their case into consideration. Following his lead the House of Lords has declared the desirability of reform, and has passed three memorable resolutions.

'1. That a strong and efficient Second Chamber is not merely an integral part of the British Constitution, but is necessary to the well-being of the State and to the balance of Parliament.

'2. That such a Chamber can best be obtained by the reform and reconstitution of the House of Lords.

'3. That a necessary preliminary of such reform and reconstitution is the acceptance of the principle that the possession of a peerage should no longer of itself give the right to sit and vote in the House of Lords.'

The third resolution was the only one upon which a division took place. It was opposed by Lord Halsbury and Lord Wemyss on the ground alleged by the former that no necessity for any change had been shown; and that it was monstrous to take away people's rights, at all events till a complete scheme of reform was brought forward. By a division of 175 to 17 the Peers approved the resolution, thus condemning the main principle upon which for very many centuries the Upper House of Parliament has rested—surely a significant sign of the times, marking the steady progress, even where it might be least expected, of democratic sentiment. It is easy for purposes of party controversy to make light of this action of the Peers; and to urge that the resolution they have accepted still leaves possible a Second Chamber composed exclusively of hereditary legislators. The division, none the less, shows the readiness of the Peers to give up those privileges that for generations have been associated with the Peerage, in order to obtain the more efficient Second Chamber which they think the nation needs. It can never be

easy for the members of a privileged order to abandon for themselves and their posterity rights that have come to them from their ancestors. The Peers have assuredly shown no selfish desire to cling to their privileges. On the contrary they have approached the subject in a liberal and patriotic spirit which, in spite of the sneers and the jeers of many of the extremists amongst their opponents, deserves and will receive due recognition from the public.

It is well that the Peers should have shown in advance the attitude they are prepared to take as regards contemplated changes in the constitution—changes that would so greatly affect their own chamber; but it is needless to say that it is for the Government—the responsible advisers of the King—to think out and lay before Parliament for its consideration and that of the public the detailed measures for carrying into effect fundamental reforms in the parliamentary system. The House of Commons in the course of the forthcoming debates will be on its trial, fully as much as the House of Lords. It has to vindicate its own position as a national assembly, and to discuss far-reaching projects of reform on the merits, and from every point of view. If instead of this it behaves as the mere servant and instrument of the Executive Government of the day, it will deal to its own authority a far severer blow than any that it is in the power of the House of Lords to inflict. It is the fear that the representative House will no longer act up to its old and its great traditions that is making so many people in the present day despair of the representative system altogether, and turn for help to 'referendums,' 'plébiscites,' and 'written constitutions,' which they vainly imagine would prove the salvation of the State from all the dangers that now threaten it.

The Prime Minister invites the House of Commons to resolve itself into a committee 'to consider the relations between the 'two Houses of Parliament, and the duration of Parliament.' In committee he intends to move three resolutions declaring the expediency of defining by statute the relations and powers of the two Houses as regards Money Bills, and other Bills, and limiting the duration of Parliament to five years. The two first resolutions are so important that we give them verbatim.

'Money Bills. 1. That it is expedient that the House of Lords be disabled by law from rejecting or amending a Money Bill, but that any such limitation by law shall not be taken to diminish or qualify the existing rights and privileges of the House of Commons.

'For the purpose of this resolution, a Bill shall be considered a Money Bill if in the opinion of the Speaker it contains only

provisions dealing with all or any of the following subjects, namely —The imposition, repeal, remission, alteration, or regulation of taxation; charges on the Consolidated Fund, or the provision of money by Parliament; supply; the appropriation, control, or regulation of public money; the raising or guarantee of any loan, or the repayment thereof; or matters incidental to those subjects or any of them.'

Such an enactment as is here proposed would hardly alter, if it altered it at all, modern constitutional usage. As to the Budget Bill, granting the supplies for the year in a single Act—the system started by Mr. Gladstone after the dispute on the paper duties—there has never till now been any dispute at all. Till the action of the House of Lords last November statesmen of all parties accepted the modern practice, and would have deemed a departure from it by the House of Lords as almost 'revolutionary.' On the other hand, by the accepted practice of the constitution the Commons had no right to 'tack' on to Money Bills matter unconnected with their main object; and if they did so the Lords might constitutionally reject such Bills. The House of Lords' own standing order declares that 'the 'annexing of any clause or clauses to a Bill of aid or supply the 'matter of which is foreign to and different from the matter of the 'said Bill of aid or supply is unparliamentary, and tends to the 'destruction of the constitution of the government,' thereby admitting that a Bill strictly confined to the grant of supply is within the sole jurisdiction of the House of Commons. And this has been the unbroken usage of the constitution.

On the second clause of the above resolution several important questions arise. It would be unfairly to discredit the honest intention of the authors of these resolutions to suppose that they desire anything else than a true interpretation of the words they themselves have chosen. The two Houses of Parliament at present naturally interpret for themselves their own standing orders. But to interpret the words of an Act of Parliament is not the business of either or both Houses of Parliament, but of his Majesty's judges. There is no doubt a strong and reasonable dislike on the part of Parliament to calling in the judges to decide questions of difference between the two Houses. If there were a written constitution, it would of course be interpreted, like other statutes, by the Courts of Law. The proposal of the Government is that this particular statute framed by themselves to regulate the relations between the House of Lords and the House of Commons is to be interpreted not by an independent authority, but by one of the parties in difference—namely, by the House of Commons itself. The duty of the Speaker is to

represent the House of Commons, to protect its privileges, and to assert its claims ; not to act as an independent judge between the Chamber, whose servant he is, and some outside authority. What is really required is a species of 'standing orders committee' composed of members of high standing in both Houses, say the Speaker, the Lord Chancellor, and three others, to whom when a Bill is introduced (not after it has struggled laboriously through one House of Parliament) should be referred the question of its conformity to the rules prescribed. We see no intrinsic difficulty in providing for a proper interpretation of such regulations as Parliament is willing to lay down, though, of course, if statesmen, instead of endeavouring to settle things, prefer to prolong and intensify difficulty between the Houses, the interpretation clause of the first resolution gives them ample opportunity for so doing. With proper amendment of the second clause we think Parliament would do well to accept the substance of this resolution. We regret its necessity, but we doubt whether any Liberal Ministry of the last half-century would not have felt absolutely compelled, by the unfortunate action of the House of Lords in rejecting the Budget, to have recourse to some such measure to safeguard the long acknowledged and essential supremacy over finance and taxation of the House of Commons.

It is impossible to regard with equal favour the second of the proposed resolutions. It runs as follows :

'Bills other than Money Bills. 2. That it is expedient that the powers of the House of Lords, as respects Bills other than Money Bills, be restricted by law, so that any such Bill which has passed the House of Commons in three successive sessions, and having been sent up to the House of Lords at least one month before the end of the session, has been rejected by that House in each of those sessions, shall become law without the consent of the House of Lords, on the Royal assent being declared ; Provided that at least two years shall have elapsed between the date of the first introduction of the Bill in the House of Commons and the date on which it passes the House of Commons for the third time.

'For the purpose of this resolution a Bill shall be treated as rejected by the House of Lords if it has not been passed by the House of Lords either without amendment or with such amendments only as may be agreed upon by both Houses.'

With regard to resolution (1) the Government propose to enact by law what they contend with much plausibility to be already the usage of the constitution. As to resolution (2) there can of course be no pretence that it does not change fundamentally the parliamentary system which has always existed and still

exists. The object is to abolish what is called in the inaccurate and inappropriate language of the day the 'veto of the House 'of Lords.' Each House has hitherto been an essential and effective branch of the Legislature. The two must co-operate in enacting in substance and detail every proposed measure before it can become law. It may originate either in the House of Lords or in the House of Commons; but the last House before which it comes is vested with far greater authority than the mere right of saying Yes or No to the legislative project of the first. Under resolution (2) the House of Commons is to possess the whole legislative power of the State, subject only to a power left to the House of Lords to cause the delay of a couple of years before the enactment comes into force. This is undoubtedly a very long stride towards the establishment of a 'single-chamber Parliament' in England. And Ministers of the Crown will have to make out a strong case of necessity before they can hope for the assent of the country to so mighty a change.

The Opposition in the House of Commons have met these resolutions by an amendment that 'this House is willing to 'consider proposals for the reform of the constitution of the 'existing Second Chamber, but declines to proceed with proposals 'which would destroy the usefulness of any Second Chamber, 'however constituted, and would remove the only safeguard 'against great changes being made by the Government of the 'day, not only without the consent, but against the wishes of the 'majority of the electors.'

Thus the action taken by the House of Lords, the resolutions moved in the House of Commons by the Prime Minister, and Sir Robert Finlay's amendment on going into Committee upon them, make the official attitude of the two parties clear. Both regard our constitutional system as requiring reform. The Opposition would seek for this by improving the composition of the Second Chamber; the Government by simply limiting the functions of the House of Lords as it stands, and limiting them to such an extent as to give almost complete legislative authority to a majority, possibly a very temporary majority, of the House of Commons. We cannot doubt that the Opposition have taken a wiser line on this subject and one which commends itself far more to the traditions of British statesmanship, than that which has been adopted by the Ministry. The Government, it is true, does not profess a desire to set up a single-chamber system; and several members of the Cabinet have declared very plainly that individually they look ultimately to a reformed Second Chamber as a permanent and important part of our parliamentary system. The country, however, must deal with

the proposals of the Government as they stand—proposals which they are asking Parliament and the nation to adopt. It has to deal with them, moreover, with full knowledge that though the unrestrained omnipotence for all purposes of a majority of the House of Commons may be distasteful to some Liberal statesmen, it is ardently desired by an energetic portion of the Liberal party. The Government proposal is that our Second Chamber shall have no power to amend or reject any Bill which has the support of a majority of the House of Commons. It can delay it for two years, after which it is to ' become law without ' the assent of the House of Lords.' This is to give the House of Commons of the future an authority and power in the State which no House of Commons has ever yet enjoyed—an authority and power not merely over the House of Lords, but over the electorate itself. It will be able, for instance, by repealing Septennial and Quinquennial Acts, to prolong indefinitely its own existence. Indeed, so far as we can see, it will be entirely untrammelled, so long as it has two years to run, by any law whatever ! The proposal is to substitute for our limited monarchy—King, Lords and Commons—an absolute monarchy accountable, except at its own sweet will, to nobody at all. Long live King Commons !

Are these proposals to be taken seriously ? They may be intended merely to rally in the Lobby for a time a majority among whom there is the conspicuous absence of a common binding principle ; and they should at least serve for the threshing out by parliamentary debate of some of the constitutional problems which the future has to face. Among statesmen, constitutional authorities, and those whose opinions count much with their fellows, a single-chamber system has few friends. But of the extremists, to whom the inertness of moderate men too often surrenders the management of political machinery, this cannot be said. Still, on this subject the electors are themselves pretty well informed ; and they know that in the very large number of Legislatures that have been established byEnglishmen in various parts of the world the two-chamber system has everywhere been adopted. It is almost universal on the Continent of Europe, the example of Greece to the contrary not throwing much weight into the opposite scale.

We have, however, in our own country an historical precedent, of which possibly electors in the southern kingdom are hardly aware. For many centuries, and till the Union, the old Parliament of Scotland consisted of a single chamber, in which, as Andrew Fairservice put it, Lords and Commons used to sit together ' cheek ' by jowl '—an arrangement to his mind of much convenience, since

in the old days ' they didna' need to hae the same blethers twice ' o'er again.' But in our time the most patriotic of Scotsmen would be unwilling to search for lessons in parliamentary constitutionalism from the practice of the Scottish Estates before the ' sad and sorrowful Union.' Mr. Gladstone, when wishing to endow Ireland with a separate Parliament, proposed to constitute it of two Houses. The present Prime Minister has accepted our old constitutional arrangements for South Africa. And there can be no manner of doubt that were the present advisers of the King to propose in plain language that the Parliament of the United Kingdom should consist for the future of one chamber only they would be immediately repudiated by the country.

There are many reasons that seem to make the existence of a good Second Chamber even more necessary than heretofore. Men have not forgotten the history of Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bills to which reference has already been made—the first rejected by the House of Commons because there were in that Assembly a certain number of statesmen and members of sufficient independence to stand by their principles even though it was necessary in so doing to oppose their old leader and sever themselves from their old party;—the second forced through the House of Commons almost behind the backs of the electorate, and then rightly rejected by the House of Lords, whose action was subsequently ratified at a general election. Since then individual independence in the House of Commons has been a diminishing quantity. More and more the party caucuses have come under central control, and more and more have they acquired the power of themselves controlling parliamentary representatives. The system carried to a high pitch of perfection in America was, when it was introduced and began to spread in this country, fiercely, but without much avail, denounced by Mr. W. E. Forster and other public-spirited men. The methods by which Bills are nowadays summarily forced through the House of Commons, large parts of them quite undiscussed, have still further tended to diminish public respect for that branch of the Legislature. We are not imputing blame to one party more than to the other for these things. But, whatever the reason may be, it can hardly be denied that the House of Commons has lost ground in recent years in general estimation. It is not easy to have patience with Englishmen who are without loyalty to the House of Commons as an institution, who are without pride in its glorious past, and who do not look forward to its continued life as the chief element in the greatest of all Parliaments that the world has seen. But the times are certainly not opportune for removing from its absolute exercise

of power all those checks upon hasty and ill-considered action which, though attended with some drawbacks, were found to be on the whole salutary even in the palmiest days of parliamentary government.

While, however, we are entirely in favour of an efficient Second Chamber, we cannot but feel the extremely difficult position in which any Liberal Government is placed by the existence of a permanently hostile party majority of the House of Lords constituted as it is to-day. As we have said, Mr. Asquith, in our opinion, is acting rightly and constitutionally in preserving intact the right of the House of Commons over the supplies of the year. The unfortunate position taken up by the House of Lords on this subject has weakened their defence of legislative rights and privileges that have never hitherto been questioned. These unquestioned rights over ordinary legislation have of late undoubtedly been exercised with a very high hand ; and a Liberal Ministry supported by the country and the House of Commons may well ask if it is to be permanently disabled by a majority in the House of Lords from passing its measures into law. The large increase in the number of Peers has a good deal changed the character of that assembly, and has probably weakened its sense of responsibility. The Liberals not only make an insignificant appearance in the Division Lobby, they are hopelessly overpowered in debate. This is a great change from those comparatively recent days when a large proportion of the statesmen of experience in the House of Lords sat on the Liberal side. There is now no group of statesmen in hereditary and personal sympathy with Liberal aspirations to exercise some power of persuasion even over the inborn Conservatism of the majority of Peers. No one takes the place of Lord Granville, or Lord Spencer, or Lord Kimberley. Not long before his death the Duke of Devonshire played the part of sagacious adviser to the House of Lords in the difficulty that arose over the Education Bill, and had his advice been taken a reasonable compromise might have been arrived at. It was in this way that again and again parliamentary deadlock was avoided. But now the moderate element in the House of Lords seems to be as incapable of modifying the Conservative partisanship of the majority as are the moderate Liberals in the House of Commons of moderating the extravagance of extreme Radicals.

In spite of all the violence and exaggeration of rival politicians, and the ringing denunciations of the party press, there is probably a considerable consensus of opinion among quiet people as to the kind of remedy to be sought for an unsatisfactory state of things. After deducting some bad language and much platform exaggeration, it is possible to see a good deal of common

ground between thinking men on both sides as to the needs of the Constitution. A single-chamber system is almost out of court. On the other hand, very few wish for a Second Chamber strong enough to resist the considered judgement of the nation as represented in the House of Commons. It is agreed that some reconsideration and revision by a Second Chamber is desirable. It is felt, even outside the limits of the Liberal party, that the House of Lords lags behind the times, and expresses far too exclusively the views and feelings of limited classes of the community. The hereditary principle upon which it rests strikes multitudes of Englishmen as an interesting historical survival unsuited to present conditions and ways of thought, and, indeed, as almost grotesque in its absurdity. The small number of Peers who take their duties seriously and perform them regularly compared with the crowd that throngs the lobbies on some special occasion, when perhaps their own interests are largely involved, creates among the people a wide and very unfavourable impression. Then its strong partisanship gives it in the public eye the appearance of a mere instrument of the Conservative caucus, and this in the long run tells against its character and reputation. From all these things the prestige of the House of Lords suffers; but they are certainly not the necessary concomitants of a Second Chamber.

In the very able speech of the Prime Minister on March 29 introducing his resolutions, and in the very able reply of Mr. Balfour, who followed him in debate, we see a good deal of evidence that the ultimate objects at which the two rival statesmen are aiming are not necessarily very dissimilar. The recent action taken of the House of Lords is the fullest admission of the unsatisfactory character of that chamber as at present constituted. Had the majority of Peers agreed with Lord Halsbury and Lord Wemyss we should almost have despaired of a rational termination of the controversy. But the House of Lords by an immense majority decided against them, and declared for Lord Rosebery and reform. It is sufficiently clear that a way out of our present constitutional difficulties can only ultimately be arrived at through some kind of compromise. It is not our English habit to carry great reforms by violence; and there is no kind of excuse for it in present circumstances. The notion that the Prime Minister will advise the King to create four or five hundred Peers may be dismissed. It is hardly conceivable that any Prime Minister, and certainly not the present one, should wish to make his Sovereign, his Government, and himself ridiculous in the eyes of all men by recommending a step of revolutionary violence which, instead of settling anything, would serve only to increase the confusion!

History has approved the action taken in 1832 by Lord Grey and the King. Lord Grey did not advise the step till everything else had failed, and even then he strove so to act as to do the least possible violence to constitutional usage. The threat proved sufficient, saved the country from revolution, and enabled it to pursue in peace the paths of orderly progress. Several of Lord Grey's Ministry, more radical than their chief, had for some time been warmly pressing upon him recourse to the Royal Prerogative. Lord Durham in particular (the 'Radical Jack' of the Reform era) had in December 1831 written to Lord Grey strongly advising a sufficient creation of Peers even before the Bill (the Second Reform Bill) had reached the House of Lords. Again, in the erroneous belief that the Peers would reject that Bill on the second reading, he pressed upon his chief a large creation, to the point almost of his own resignation; and Lord Althorp shared his opinions.* But the responsibility weighed more heavily on the shoulders of the Prime Minister than of those of his more advanced colleagues; and no wise man now blames Lord Grey for his unwillingness, till the necessity was proved, to threaten one of the independent branches of the Legislature with the exercise of the Royal Prerogative.

Whatever may be the result of attempts to limit the authority of the House of Lords, it is made tolerably certain by the debates that have taken place in and out of Parliament that its composition will before long be greatly modified. We hear a good deal about the difficulty of constructing Second Chambers. Such work certainly ought not to be undertaken without the utmost care and deliberation. But after all it is a difficulty that has often been surmounted elsewhere. As is pointed out in another article, Cromwell felt strongly the need of a Second Chamber 'as a check or balancing power' on the First. But it was the misfortune of that great and wise ruler that, his power having originated in violence, he was heavily handicapped in the work of building up permanent institutions for the people. By our constitutional machinery of the present day much may be effected which in other times, and in other countries, would have been impossible. Most assuredly British statesmanship need not quail before the task of discovering a sounder and more suitable principle for the construction of a Second Chamber in these democratic days than the one upon which the House of Lords now rests. We see great reason to hope that our present controversies will result in practical reforms, which will add to the usefulness and the dignity of parliamentary government.

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